GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

REPORT ON
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

BY

A. D. GORWALA

PLANNING COMMISSION

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

In the course of its work during the past year the Planning Commission has had to consider in different fields the question whether the present administrative machinery and methods were adequate and could meet the requirements of planned development. The Commission felt that it would be of considerable value at the present time to obtain an independent and objective assessment of the problems of public administration. Accordingly, it requested Mr. A. D. Gorwala, to make such a study and suggest measures for bringing about improvements in public administration, especially in relation to the implementation of development programmes of the Central and State Governments.

Mr. Gorwala's report is a valuable analysis of these problems. It is important that weaknesses in the existing system and methods of administration should be widely appreciated and steps for remedying them undertaken. For, there can be no doubt that clean, efficient and impartial administration is the first condition of successful democratic planning.

The Commission wishes to express its gratitude to Mr. Gorwala for undertaking the present study.

N. R. PILLAI,
Secretary,
Planning Commission.

NEW DELHI,
July, 27, 1951

Bombay, 30th April, 1951.

To

The Deputy Chairman,

Planning Commission,

NEW DELHI.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit the report desired by you. The scope of the report was not defined by formal terms of reference. In the letter No. PC(C)116/50, dated March 1st, 1951, to Ministries of the Government of India and State Governments it was stated, however, that the Planning Commission, having had to consider whether the present administrative machinery and methods were adequate and were calculated to create confidence in the public, Mr. Gorwala had agreed, in an honorary capacity as a non-official, to prepare a report during the next two or three months on the measures necessary for bringing such changes as may be required in public administration.

The enquiry was begun on the 1st March and the report has been completed to-day. The States of Bombay, Madras, Travancore-Cochin, Mysore, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh were visited. Some time was spent in Delhi. Opportunity was also taken, while in Delhi, to contact gentlemen from the East Punjab and Madhya Bharat States.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
A. D. GORWALA.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

SINCE public administration is not merely a science that can be expounded, but also and essentially, an art that is practised, public welfare demands that from time to time an assessment should be made of its practice and of the opinion about it of those for whose benefit it is assumed to function. More than ever is this necessary now in India, when new proposals are likely to impose upon the machinery further responsibilities. The questions then arise: Is the administration fulfilling its existing duties adequately? Is it capable of taking on the fresh burdens involved in development?

Before attempting to answer these questions, we must take into account certain fundamental facts. Administrative machinery and methods cannot be considered apart from those who use them. Bad Government and good administration, for example, are at best a temporary combination. The interplay between the two being continuous and unremitting, the quality of the administration is bound to be affected by that of the Government. Government for its part derives the main features of its strength or weakness from the character of the people, their leaders and the nature of the prevailing political set-up. Since administration has to be considered not merely as a machine but as the vital instrument through which a democracy carries out its policies, its organic connection for good or ill with the body politic in general and with the Ministry, parties and Legislature in particular cannot be ignored. An enquiry into administrative machinery and methods has necessarily to consider these aspects.

The points that have to be kept in view in such an enquiry are trends of deterioration if any, the causes underlying them, possible short-term remedies to arrest further deterioration, and long-term but nonetheless urgent measures to fit the machinery better for undertaking the basic tasks of administration and the expanded responsibilities that follow from future development. The aspect of deterioration, as revealed by the enquiry, is so significant that it is treated at some length. In dealing with it, it is taken for granted

CHAPTER II

THE PROBLEM: NATURE AND APPROACH

THE degree of excellence in the functioning of the administrative machine is not a matter of mathematical calculation; it can only be judged from impressions and experience. The impressions of a recent tour through the larger portion of the country, combined with many years of official and non-official experience, lead to the conclusion that the machine, though sound in essentials and capable after improvement of undertaking arduous tasks, even different in kind and degree, is at the present moment run-down. The work allotted to it has increased, the quality of its output has deteriorated. The parts removed from it have, in many instances, been replaced by those of inferior workmanship. The edge has been taken off through strain and occasionally, rough treatment, of many of those that remain. The tenter too is new, often impatient and inefficient. Co-ordination is frequently wanting. For reasons, some within and many beyond the machine's control, efficiency is undoubtedly impaired. All in all, there is considerable room for improvement.

There is also considerable public dissatisfaction with it. The public often does not discriminate between Government and the administrative machinery of Government. Accordingly, it is not unusual for it to visit both on the Government and its machinery, the anger engendered by the policies of Government as well as that caused by the actions of Government servants. Economic conditions are at the root of a very great deal of public discontent. The high cost of living and the inability to get essentials, which have recently culminated in both rural and urban areas in higher prices for food-grains and acute scarcity of cloth, have embittered large sections of the population very greatly. The gist of this, the most general and the most important complaint against Government, is: Why are adequate quantities of food and cloth not provided at reasonable prices? Why are the prices of other essentials being allowed to be pushed up? Has Government no time for this? Must it waste its energy on useless things?

This feeling is intensified by a fairly general belief in the lack of integrity of many of those in high position. Ministers, legislators, officials—all fall within the ambit of this disapproval. There is a tendency to believe the worst of everyone and there are not very many against whom nothing at all is said. The lack of integrity alleged takes many shapes. Patronage, undue interference, actual corruption—these are all different forms of the disease which large sections of the embittered public believe has infected the body politic.

Delay in the despatch of business contributes further to public dissatisfaction. The ordinary citizen gets very tired of having to wait for an answer and he is apt to ascribe any undue delay to the desire to obtain illicit gain on the part of the official or minister, who will not come to a conclusion in regard to his particular matter. A certain amount of dilatoriness is inherent in the system, but it cannot be denied that a great deal of the dilatoriness so bitterly complained against is due to those working the system rather than to the system itself. When to delay is added, as often happens, lack of personal touch, lack of explanation of policy and lack of explanation of the reasons for refusing to take certain action, the dissatisfaction is naturally greater. Members of the public are often inclined to feel that from the public servant, minister as well as Government official, they are not getting a fair deal. Hence the feeling of lack of confidence, which makes them forget that quite often they themselves have been attempting to obtain from Government something which is not their right but which they desire for their own private benefit or in order to obtain an advantage over somebody else. The disappointment of many sections of the people is, of course, all the greater because they had been brought up to think that all the ills of this country were due to the foreigner and that, once he had been got rid of, very substantial progress in the standard of living would automatically follow.

There is a belief firmly held in some quarters that what we are suffering from today is not so much material poverty or intellectual poverty as spiritual poverty. The problem, it is felt, is essentially ethical. It accordingly resolves itself into the building up of the character of the human material involved. Observers who hold this view contend that there has been a great decline in character

generally in the recent past. For this, two reasons are urged. India took part in the last war and while, for example, many millions of the poor died in the Bengal Famine as a result of the scarcity that followed the loss of Burma, some of her industrialists and business-men acquired great riches during the war. Though many people shared in the war-effort, for most it was not their war. The spirit of self-sacrifice and high endeavour that comes from participation in a war in defence of ideals was generally absent. Accordingly, the material benefits that came from it not only affected detrimentally the character of those who gained from it enormously in ways legal and illegal, but reduced on the whole the moral calibre of many others. Even some officials belonging to classes that had hitherto been regarded as incorruptible found temptation too great to resist. The example set by vast wealth acquired illegally without undue difficulty and enjoyed freely without the least apprehension was a further factor responsible for the decline in character.

Secondly, the political movement, it is said, contributed to the moral decline. The standard of conduct imposed by the leader of the political movement was so high that the bulk of his followers could not lift themselves up to it, with the result that their acceptance of his doctrine was superficial. Moved by his personality they became fired with emotion and followed his lead. Emotion, however, is transitory, and, when it dies down, leaves its subject, morally, exactly where he was before he felt it. It does not impose upon him that deep discipline which permeating the mind, burns away all dross. Hence, with the success of the movement, in many of its prominent followers there remained nothing but the original man; and the original man, more especially when enthroned in power and endowed with moral phrases, in a number of instances, acted according to his nature rather than according to the tenets he had ostensibly accepted when emotionally inspired by his great master.

There seems little doubt that greater moral discipline is a pre-requisite for the advancement of the nation. This discipline must permeate from the core to the essential parts. Emotion can never be a substitute for discipline and at the present time even that fire is not burning very brightly. Plans, in any case, are unlikely to

arouse emotion. Their aim must be to arouse disciplined enthusiasm, that is, provide an ideology on the basis of which the individual will be prepared to sacrifice for the common good. If this were to come about, it would, among other things, be an automatic aid to national discipline.

Considering then the wide-spread discontent about essential economic matters, the many allegations of lack of integrity among those who direct, influence and operate the administrative machinery, the frequent failure of co-ordination on their part and sometimes even of goodwill and understanding, the dilatoriness and inefficiency of the machine and the need, not only to remedy all these, but to build for the future, the best approach to the problem at the present time would seem to be:—

(a) Giving first place to first things and making the best use of the best people: priorities for policies and personnel;

(b) Insisting on standards of integrity, implicit and explicit: not only the reality of integrity but also the demonstrable appearance of integrity;

(c) Promoting mutual understanding: proper readjustment of the human relations involved in Government and administration;

(d) Reorganising the machine so as to ensure greater speed, effectiveness and responsiveness; and

(e) Arranging for proper training, for the short-term as well as the long-term, and planning proper recruitment for the long-term.

CHAPTER III

PRIORITIES

A Welfare State is not the product of a paper Constitution. There can be no welfare without economic well-being. Now one of the most unfortunate features of the present Indian situation is that the position during the last few years in respect of even the basic necessities has been worse than at any time during the period of the war. So far, therefore, from an improvement in economic well-being, after the transfer of power there has been a distinct deterioration. The remedying of this is the real problem of the Indian State. No Government, least of all the Government of India, at the present juncture, can afford to proceed on the basis that it is better to attempt many things than to achieve a few. If it does so attempt, it must dissipate its energies and resources to little purpose. The basic things are food, clothing and shelter. It is not suggested that Government should abjure all other activities until these objectives are fully gained, but it does seem that today, after providing for the legitimate requirements of external and internal security, the most important task of Government is that which falls within the economic sphere. This task can be divided into two parts. Emergent remedies must be found for acute economic ills; and economic well-being must be built up. The first involves all those measures that come under the general heading of controls and the second means increasing resources with the object, not of allowing the concentration of wealth in a few hands, but of raising the standard of living generally. There are undoubtedly many other activities in which a modern government has to take part and these cannot altogether be ignored, but the effort and expenditure in men and money on these must obviously not be such as to prejudice the fundamental task, for, if this fails, everything else must also fail.

In order to attain success in the economic sphere, as indeed in all other spheres of Government, objectives must be clearly envisaged, understood and arranged in order of priority; policy in pursuance

of those objectives must be informed and determined; and implementation of that policy must be effective. The ideology of the party in power and the wisdom and vision of those in office will be the principal factors in the choice of objectives. The formation of a proper policy depends both on these and on the calibre of the official personnel, while for effective implementation the quality and the numerical adequacy of the personnel at different levels is what matters most.

Lack of clarity in objectives is one of the most frequent causes of failure in implementation. There could scarcely be a better example of this particular fault than the combined objective of self-sufficiency within a stated period in foodgrains, cotton and jute. Again, it is lack of clarity and unwillingness to assess priorities in objectives that leads to a situation in which Government has at one and the same time the two objectives of providing food for the people at reasonable prices and cutting down all imports. Clear-thinking would inevitably have shown that in the present circumstances if the first was to have been attained, the second could not be. Similar examples are not lacking in almost every part of the economic field. Thus only absence of clarity could lead to the objectives of grain at a fixed price and alternative competing crops like oilseeds at any price or of cloth and cotton at a fixed price but unginned cotton at any price.

However clearly apprehended the objective may be, if the policy framed to attain it is not based upon knowledge and pursued in determined fashion, it cannot be reached. The cloth policy of the Government of India in recent months can well be regarded as a monument to misinformation and vacillation. Prices are increased, modified within a short time and raised again a few days later. Goods are permitted to be sold for export and then exports are curtailed. To be able to respond to changing situations is certainly desirable but flexibility does not mean allowing the situation to get the better of one through lack of knowledge and determination, and having continuously to shift one's ground.

Effective implementation is possible only by the proper use of proper instruments. The instruments of Governmental policy are officials. It is well known that following the transfer of power

there has been considerable depletion of the senior ranks with consequent promotion from the lower ranks to the higher posts. This has, to a certain extent, affected implementation at the Centre, in the Provincial Secretariats and in the districts, though it must not be forgotten that in many instances the few senior officials in charge have been able, at any rate during periods of stress and emergency, to get excellent work out of their inexperienced, newly promoted juniors, and indeed, in many provinces, the quality of specific portions of work has, on occasion, been as good as, if not better than, in the past. On the whole, however, it would be idle to deny the presence of considerable deterioration. Keenness can make up for inexperience some of the time but in many instances there may be absence of both keenness and experience. Nothing better can really be expected, when Collector's posts are held by people who in the normal course would often not have risen even to Deputy Collectorships, or Deputy Secretaries' posts by persons who would at most have become Assistant Secretaries towards the end of their lives. In spite of such tools, most Governments have increased greatly be kind and extent of official work. Some of this has been well done; much badly. Implementation from the very nature of things is often ineffective.

In the circumstances, if maximum progress is desired, the only course possible is to place first things first. Effort must be deliberately directed towards a few specific goals, since it is apparent that there is no plethora of good instruments available and both direction and drive must come from those qualified to impart them. The best officials must be placed in positions of strategic effectiveness and the best possible use must be made of all officials in order to obtain success in the fields chosen. Thus there is no point in appointing an official as an ambassador when his experience qualifies him to deal successfully with a difficult control and when by so appointing him, another effective official could be made available for handling another control which must be started to make the first work well.

There must be no clash between the Centre and the States as regards objectives, policy and implementation. To agreement on objectives and policy there must be added a co-ordinated plan for the disposition of manpower. That which is of real importance must

be done thoroughly, that of secondary importance relegated to the background.

This question of priorities applies with equal force to the allocation of funds. The spending of money too must be directed towards those objectives which, it is agreed, serve the greatest need, instead of being concentrated on those which interest prominent Ministers most or scattered over a large number of subjects, all no doubt desirable but in the aggregate likely to be much less beneficial than the one or two which are really crucial. Thus for a deficit State to raise its expenditure on education fourfold in four years while that on minor irrigation remains about the same seems inappropriate in view of the urgent need for food.

Linked with this is the question of assessment of results. Governments indulge in large expenditure hoping that certain results will follow from the expenditure. This often does not happen, but very rarely is any machinery devised to examine and assess results. Such machinery should invariably be indicated and its duties clearly laid down, whenever large expenditure is sanctioned. Otherwise money continues to be poured out year after year in the mistaken belief that the anticipated progress is made, whereas in reality very little happens. Expenditure other than the initial should be considered afresh in the light of the reports of this machinery.

CHAPTER IV

INTEGRITY

In the circumstances of the present time, the necessity of high moral standards for both the Government and the administration can hardly be exaggerated. The system of Government we have adopted postulates these standards. Parliamentary government with a cabinet system on the British model cannot be effective unless the standard of morality of those who work it is high and the general public believe it to be so. Without these, the parliamentary system may limp along but its existence will always be in danger, for there is no more potent weapon in the hands of opponents of democracy than the ability to show that under the democratic system power passes into the hands of the corrupt and the self-seeker. Parliamentary government is in its infancy in this country. Accordingly, this is the proper time to lay down and observe conventions, so that with the passage of years they may consolidate into traditions which those who come hereafter will accept instinctively knowing that, based as they are on the wisdom of their fathers, they will serve their turn well. Moreover as the malady which affects the body politic today is the lowering of individual character and weakening of the moral fibre, the remedy must also be sought on the moral plane. In this matter, example is infinitely better than precept and the example of those in high places is apt to be particularly effective for, as the Sanskrit proverb says "As the King, so the people". A very special obligation rests therefore on Ministers, Legislators and Administrators of the higher ranks. Their every official action must be based on principles and they must realise that to the extent that they depart from principle, they are harming not only themselves and affecting detrimentally their own moral development but undermining the stability of the State.

It is not enough to act with integrity. Justice, it has been said, must not only be done but must be seen to be done. So too moral standards must not only be observed but must be seen to be observed. In other words, they must be so observed as to eliminate the

possibility of suspicion and secure the general recognition of the observers. Accordingly, for public servants—Ministers and Legislators just as much as Administrators—there is not only a standard of conduct to be maintained but a code of behaviour to be followed. The one evokes judgment, the other comment. Judgment is slow and not every one's task. Comment is swift and almost every one's business.

Great as is its importance in all democracies, comment has particular significance in India today. Wherever one goes, one finds unfavourable, often perhaps unjustified, comment on the standards of many of those in high places. In fact, it has been said over and over again in places as far apart as Travancore and Delhi or as Mysore and Calcutta that the principal cause of lack of confidence in Governments and administrative machinery is the many tales of improper behaviour of those in power. The psychological atmosphere produced by this persistent and unfavourable comment is itself the cause of further moral deterioration, for people will begin to adapt their methods, even for securing a legitimate right, to what they believe to be the tendency of men in power and office. Thus, if there is a wide range of stories which says that there is no use making a request to K until you get a chit from X Y Z and that the only way to get a chit from X Y Z is to pay a bribe to A B C, people, when they have to make a request to K will instinctively turn to A B C rather than go directly to the fountain head. Every instance of this nature morally degrades the person who practises it and affects the confidence of those who hear about it. It prepares them mentally, moreover, to believe in tales, however exaggerated or wild, that they may hear about those in power. This is indeed a very real danger and while, triple-plated in the armour of one's own innocence and good intentions, the Minister or Administrator may declare "They say. What say they? Let them say", he must remember that he does not live by himself and that the fact of what is believed about him is going to affect not only people's estimate of him and their view of the Government of which he forms a part, but also their conduct in regard to that Government.

It is, of course, true that many of the stories one hears are exaggerated and that people are apt to believe them for various extraneous reasons. The frustration that results from the present

economic difficulties of many people especially, in the middle classes, often finds a scapegoat in the alleged mis-behaviour of Governments and administrations. If things are not better, it must be because people in power are corrupt. There is also a type of mind which derives a peculiar satisfaction from criticising "our own people". They are so near to us and so like us; they have power and we have none; consequently we are apt to exaggerate their faults and even while knowing that much of what is said about them must be false, like to believe that it is true. Allowance must also be made for political malice and the general intoxication and lack of objectivity that comes from newly acquired freedom. There is too the unfortunate trait so common among our people that love is to blame rather than to praise. Yet even after considering all these, a substratum of truth still remains out of the many allegations of lack of integrity throughout the country. Remedies must be found to induce a mode of behaviour which, if it cannot eliminate, will at least reduce very substantially these allegations and will prepare the ground for a climate of opinion which will receive such allegations with extreme incredulity.

The deviation from moral standards of Ministers, Legislators and Administrators takes various forms. These can be classified under three main heads; corruption, patronage (based on communalism, sectarianism, nepotism and favouritism) and influence. Whatever the form, there can be no doubt that it vitiates policy, weakens administration and undermines public confidence.

It may, of course, be said that the description above emphasises unduly the likely effects of lack of moral standards. After all, there are governments, and democratic governments even today in which the bulk of the Ministers are known to be corrupt and yet the countries function and the people are able to lead reasonable lives without undue hardship. Nor do they feel particularly degraded. Their achievements in the field of science and their other cultural activities would sometimes do credit to any era or country. Corruption, patronage and influence were the rule in England itself up to about 120 years ago, during the very period of its expansion and development. The question may be asked why then is it assumed that these evils, even if they exist, are likely to be so very

detrimental to the well-being of the Indian State? To take the second case first, when Government in England was corrupt, it was oligarchical and it is possible for an efficient oligarchy to be corrupt and still manage affairs fairly well, because a close corporation is apt to recognise real needs and interests and will not let its corruption interfere and misgovern to the point of causing the people to destroy the State. As regards the first instance, countries of the nature described certainly continue to exist but they do so by the grace of a strong traditional system of administration with which there is very little interference by the Ministers and a sound and fairly prosperous peasantry which refuses to allow any intolerable oppression. Moreover, in such countries administration confines itself to absolutely essential tasks. There is no question of building Welfare States. In rare instances, their resources are so great that they can almost be said to be able to afford corruption. The position in India is, of course, very diffierent. Our aim is a real democracy moving towards the establishment of a proper Welfare State; we do not believe in oligarchy or despotism; our people are poor and docile; we have in every sphere a great deal of leeway to make up. As the example of China has shown, deviation from moral standards represents for us a most powerful danger, and we must devise and work with energy and goodwill all measures to meet it.

During the past few years there have been various instances in which grave allegations of a specific nature have been made by responsible parties against persons occupying the position of Ministers of Governments. Such allegations have on occasion been the subject of debates in the Legislatures. The Ministry as a whole and the party which has put it in power having thrown their weight behind the Minister complained against, the debates have either been inconclusive or have ended in a vote in his favour. Thereafter, the matter has generally been ended. Enquiries into the allegations have sometimes been made by senior all-India leaders of the principal political party; occasionally their reports have been made public, but often they have remained secret. Some of the reports have exculpated those complained against and some have, in effect, condemned them. In any case, no action has been taken. It is not surprising that when grave allegations by responsible parties are made against people holding positions of high authority and they

continue to remain in power without being cleared of the accusations, the public generally feel that anybody really influential can get away with anything. It seems fairly clear that if the public are to have confidence that moral standards do prevail in high places, arrangements must be made that no one, however highly placed, is immune from enquiry if allegations against him are made by responsible parties and a *prima facie* case exists. The form of machinery and enquiry may be different for different categories of people, but there must be a machinery and it must exist within the framework of Government and not, in the case of Ministers, for example, within that of the political party. There should be no hushing up or appearance of hushing up for political and personal reasons.

The best form of machinery would be a tribunal to enquire, that is, a tribunal the purpose of which is not to punish but to find out and establish facts. In other places such tribunals have found it possible to enquire into the conduct of Ministers of the Crown and high government officials without in any way making it impossible for them to continue to work, and there is no reason why similar tribunals could not work satisfactorily in this country, considering the high standard of our judiciary. All facilities for directing investigation, obtaining evidence, examining documents etc. would have to be placed at the disposal of the tribunal. The authority responsible for setting up the tribunal might, for the Central Government, be the President, and, for State Governments, the Governor acting in consultation with the President. They, in either case, on being satisfied that there was *prima facie* evidence, would appoint a tribunal. An alternative would be to vest the power of appointing such tribunals in the Supreme Court. The existence of this power would by itself have a very salutary effect on the behaviour of people holding responsible positions and power, for there can be no doubt that at the present moment, with a parliamentary majority behind them, at least a few are inclined to hold that there is no difference between their will and the law.

It is often difficult to produce sufficient proof of corruption to obtain a conviction in a court of law and yet there may be strong and reasonable suspicion coupled with persistent public talk. Here too effective action is essential. It should take the lines suggested

in the extract below from Chapter XV of the Hyderabad Economy Committee Report :

> "Corruption, it is said, is often difficult to prove. All the more reason why there should not be the least hesitation in investigating every matter in which there is ground for complaint. Punishment, too, for corruption should be exemplary, the least being dismissal from service. There is, in this matter of corruption, one clear criterion which can be of great assistance in assessing the possibility or otherwise of its existence. Reputation can be taken as almost conclusive. It may be said of an officer who has not that particular fault, that he is harsh or rude or lazy, but it may be laid down almost as a rule, that, over a period, it will not be said, of an officer who is honest, that he is dishonest. Consequently, when a strong aroma of corruption has gathered round an officer, very rarely will it be wrong specially and thoroughly to investigate his actions, his financial position and the financial position of such of his relatives and close friends as seem to have acquired a somewhat large share of the good things of the world. No such officer should, in any case, be kept in any position of responsibility or influence."

There is very little doubt that corrupt public servants often escape detection because the machinery for detection is not sufficiently able and wide awake. It needs to be strengthened, if necessary, by importing from abroad officers who have made a special study of this subject. Such machinery should for the Centre be directly under the D.I.B., and the Central Government should not hesitate to have investigated by it special cases of corruption in the States when important public servants are concerned and when it is felt that local influences are preventing action being taken against them.

The Bengal Administrative Committee suggested the creation of an offence in which the onus of proving that he was not guilty would fall upon a public servant, when it was known that he or his dependents had suddenly become possessed of large wealth. This has not been enacted into law presumably because accession to wealth by innocent means is quite possible and it might be unjust to proceed against a person merely on the ground that such wealth had come to him. There can however, be no doubt that some action is necessary when it is known or can be seen that a public

servant or his dependents have become suddenly rich, for instance, when a man on a salary of Rs. 1,000 per month, or his wife or daughter buys or builds a house costing a couple of lakhs, or rides about in a car worth Rs. 20,000. There should be no objection in the circumstances of this country to creating this offence and putting the onus of proof on the person concerned. On completion of investigation, his explanation would be obtained by the investigating staff, and, if the explanation was unsatisfactory, prosecution would be launched after obtaining proper sanction from Government.

In certain special departments which come into continuous contact with the public and regarding which there is a great deal of complaint of corruption among the subordinate staff, special detection measures are obviously needed. It should not be difficult, for instance, to appoint one or two experienced detectives as clerks to secretly watch the behaviour of their associates and superiors. Action could then be taken on reports received. That corruption cannot be checked in a particular department where all work has to be done under one roof within certain specific premises is incomprehensible and would seem to indicate either lack of determination or of the imagination needed to try out novel measures.

The public forms its conclusion about the whole Government on the basis of its experience of one portion of it. From this point of view, the most important Central departments are the revenue-producing branches of the Finance Ministry, Income-tax and Customs, and the Commerce and Industry Ministry. These it is with which the members of the public come most into contact. If, therefore, it is Government's desire that the public should have confidence in its administrative machinery and methods, it must ensure that at least in these there is firmness and consistency of policy, efficient and expeditious despatch of business and courteous and considerate treatment of the public. Only by taking great pains at both the policy-making and the executive ends can this be achieved.

On the Income-tax side, the real complaint of the public is that while small men are often troubled quite unnecessarily, tax-evaders, whose assessment should run into lakhs, seem to escape. The failure of the Income-Tax Investigation Commission to produce any real results and the ease with which the most blatant tax-evaders seem to be able to manage their affairs undisturbed has caused a very

widespread belief in the importance of Government when pitted against really influential and wealthy people. Nor is it only past dues that the Income-tax Department would seem to be unable to recover, fresh illegal gains too the public feel remain untaxed. Unless special measures can be taken to remedy this state of affairs, the public will continue to feel indignant and contemptuous about the Income-tax Department. There would seem to be very few complaints about corruption from those sections of the population which give proper accounts and submit their forms after examination by Chartered Accountants etc. The complaints seem mostly to be from those who either do not keep their accounts properly or seek to obtain special benefits. That there is a certain amount of corruption is undoubted.

Corruption in the Customs, it is stated, has neither increased particularly nor decreased significantly. It is found at the lower levels but has not reached any very large proportions. Work is done with a fair amount of despatch. There is, however, considerable room for improvement both in work and in honesty.

Hardly anybody who has had anything to do with the activities of the previous Industry and Supply and Commerce Ministries has anything to say in their favour. Failure both of policy and implementation are alleged. There is little doubt that the handling of cloth control, for instance, typifies all the points that should be avoided in any control. Lack of planning, continuous shifts in policy, incapacity for independent thought, inability to withstand pressure and influence, these are pointed out as some of the defects in the Industry and Supply Department's management.

The Commerce Ministry had gained an unenviable notoriety in respect of the amenability of some of its principal officials to the wishes of big business. In addition, there was alleged to be considerable corruption in the grant of licences and permits, more especially, import licences and permits. A very undesirable feature was the leakage of information about changes which enabled those who got the information before others to benefit. Now it is obvious that if the new department of Commerce and Industry is to run satisfactorily, it should be well-manned both as regards quality and adequacy. Specially selected officers must be in charge and adequate

supervisory staff must be given to the sections dealing with the public. There should also be surprise checks and inspections and measures to prevent corruption as already indicated. The reputation of Government is greatly affected by the running of these departments. Businessmen often blame their own corruption on to these departments. What they say is "How can we be expected not to be corrupt when we have to spend so much to get our legitimate rights from these departments ?"

Various classes of complaints that have come to notice are summed up below :

After the announcement of Government policy, there is frequently a long delay in the issue of administrative instructions and still more so in the issue of necessary licences. Policy and instructions should invariably issue together. In a number of instances, it would seem that the policy has been changed after it has been announced to suit the wishes of certain influential persons. Sometimes Government's decisions are known in Delhi and telegraphed abroad by the press correspondents before they have been announced in India. Strong action against persons found to have been cheating either in the production of false evidence or in obtaining licences by unfair means should be taken. Trade interests concerned should be consulted and advice obtained from them regarding what they consider the satisfactory procedure, sometime in advance of issue of export quotas and not after the quotas are announced. The delays when more than one department has to be consulted are occasionally so inordinate that opportunities to export or import goods are lost. Prices jump up and if imports are in question, India has to pay more. Although import licences are issued on the basis of past performance, yet there have been cases in which new comers have been given very large licences.

When specific allegations of corruption were made in the public press against individual public servants by name in the past, the officer was generally expected to clear his name by taking the matter to the courts. Government would sanction expenses on the understanding that if the officer lost his case, he would have to reimburse Government, and if he got damages, the cost would be the first charge on damages. The filing of several such prosecutions

had a very healthy effect on the press and prevented their spreading unfounded sensational tales. No such prosecutions would seem to have been filed in recent years although there has been no lack of very specific allegations against even senior people in the Government of India.

Another useful device is that of the prompt contradiction. This necessitates examination of particularly critical newspapers immediately on issue, listing all the allegations made, prompt inquiry into them and immediate contradiction by letter to the editor of such as are false or misconceived. This can, of course, be doubly effective if, where Government is wrong, it frankly admits its error and says it is taking steps to remedy it. The idea that some newspapers are mere rags, that it does not matter what they say and that one need pay no attention to them cannot be accepted, for though Government may pay no attention to them, large numbers of the people do and what the people think must be a matter of great concern to a democratic Government.

These two lines of action combined are likely to have a very deterrent effect on the publication of false and sensational reports. If, for instance, out of six matters that have been raised, about four Government is able to say that they are completely false, and in regard to the other two points out what the correct position is, if there is any mistake admits it and says it is taking steps to rectify it, the effect on the people will be excellent. In addition, where a libellous and false allegation is made, prosecution should be instituted without delay. A realisation that the era of easy allegations is over will reinforce the feeling that Government is beginning to be watchful and responsive.

It is often stated that the procedure laid down for departmental enquiries prevents quick disposal and that consequently punishment, when imposed, comes so long after the offence that it fails to strike terror and loses all deterrent effect. There is no real reason why this should be so. A departmental enquiry ought to be completed with reasonable diligence within three months. In cases of special importance when the record is likely to be very voluminous it may be worthwhile to appoint an officer on special duty to hold such an enquiry. Also in an area where there are a large number of enquiries constantly cropping up, and the officers

likely to be appointed have their hands already full with othe work, it may be better to appoint a full-time Enquiry Officer fo the sole purpose of finishing of all departmental enquiries speedily

In a country in which it has long been recognised to be a man' clear duty to provide for his relatives, near and distant, as well a for his *Biradri* or brotherhood, very special measures are needed to deal with the many evils and injustices that comes from patron age. In many cases there is a conflict between private and public virtue. In the interests of the country obviously public virtue must prevail, but in order to avoid the difficulty inherent is not following the accepted standard of private virtue, it would be desirable to reduce as far as possible the scope of the patronage that can be exercised by any person in authority. Patronage should, in fact, be eliminated or at least narrowed down to the unavoidable minimum, by the fullest use of the Public Service Commission, Selection Boards and Selection Committees. The latter two if they do not exist should be created for filling any vacancies, that may arise in grades and categories which do not come within the purview of the Public Service Commission, and the Public Service Commission should supervise their work both at the stage of initial recruitment and at subsequent important stages of promotion. Even for temporary appointments, candidates should be chosen by Selection Boards or Committees. The tendency amongst people in power to reproduce their own kind, when disposing of appointments and making promotions, has not gone unnoticed in other democracies working under the Parliamentary system. So strong has been the feeling in some against the exercise of patronage that the task of staffing, promoting, transferring and organising the entire public service has been handed over to a statutory body responsible to Parliament alone for the performance of its functions and entirely outside the control of the Ministers. This would seem to be the position of the Public Service Board in Australia

It may not be possible perhaps to go to the same extent in this country at the present time in view of the extensive staff employed and the vast distances at which it works, but avoidance of patronage and the adoption of all measures to prevent its occurrence must always be borne in mind. Patronage in effect means giving something to somebody, which is not rightfully his or which cannot be

said to be rightfully his until the claims of others have been considered, because he bears a special relationship of some kind or other to the person dispensing the gift. It is thus doubly cursed; not only is the patron cursed because of the injustice he does but the receiver of patronage is also cursed because he begins to believe that what is necessary for advancement is not work or merit but relationship or contact. This frame of mind has an extremely deleterious effect on a public servant. It also affects detrimentally society generally, for examples of this nature tend to draw people away from legitimate duty towards effort to obtain contacts and influence. That this frame of mind has already many adherents is clear from the accounts one hears of the behaviour of some young officers and senior students in many parts of the country. The importance attached by many people to having a "god-father" is some measure of the strength of this feeling. Many who have had recent experience will bear out that this account is not overcoloured. It would sometime seem that all merit resides in members of a particular community when the Minister in charge of a department happens to belong to that community.

If a democracy is to function well, government servants must be non-political and free from party bias or allegiances. One of the worst disservices any political party could do the country would be to destroy this non-political attitude on the part of government servants. Whichever the government in power, government's work continues. If a government servant becomes a partisan, neither can he do that work with the impartiality essential, nor can the political party in power, if it belongs to the camp opposed to him, trust him in the discharge of his duties. Once the bias of political partisanship attaches itself to government servants, some form of the spoils system is inevitable. Countries in which this system has prevailed, have realised the evils that followed from it and having modified its worst excesses, are now attempting to get rid of it completely. We, who have been in a favoured position in this respect, should not allow our system to deteriorate.

This point is of special importance at the present time when an election is in the offing. To some of the men in power the temptation is great to use the influence of government servants, even to the extent of arranging transfers of suitable instruments, to secure

power again, but they must realise that this very short-sighted policy is bound to recoil upon them within a few years and is disastrous in the larger interests of the country.

Some may feel that for the good of this country there is no room for anything except a single party and that accordingly it is perfectly justifiable to use government servants to secure the success of that party. Those who think in this strain, however, patriotic they may be, do not understand or want democracy. The good public servant, in any case, welcomes a position in which he can exercise complete impartiality and conduct his duties without leaning in any direction. The Prime Minister has on more than one occasion declared his complete agreement with the view that elections must be free and fair and that no attempt must be made by government servants to influence votes by their actions, either by direct canvassing or by doing favours or disfavours to produce the necessary results. It would, however, seem that this position is not quite clearly understood in some areas and that there is considerable danger of pressure being put on government servants, more especially, where splinter groups predominate. No categorical remedy is possible for this state of affairs. A joint declaration by all leaders of parties for swearing any attempt to use government servants or the influence of government servants would probably be useful.

It is related of a certain Collector that a member of a local Legislature appeared before him and made a request. The Collector said he would let him have an answer after two days. Two days later, he explained to the M.L.A. very politely why his request could not be accepted, and how, if it was, various other people would be detrimentally affected. The M.L.A. with equal politeness asked if he could use his telephone. Permission being given, he phoned up the Minister and said that he had made this request and had been given this answer, that he was naturally very disappointed and trusted the Minister would take necessary action. He then handed over the telephone to the Collector saying the Minister wished to speak to him. The Minister said he knew the facts of the case and desired that what the M.L.A. asked should be done. The Collector hesitated, suggested sending him the papers for consideration and attempted to argue. The Minister was adamant and ended the con-

versation by saying "Well you know my views. You can do what I want or.....". The Collector in this case decided to do what the Minister wanted and passed orders accordingly. The story came out through the M.L.A. who used it to let his friends and constituents know how Collectors should be dealt with.

This is a blatant instance of undue influence by a Legislator. There is no doubt that a good deal of this kind of thing prevails, either in this very open form or more subtly. Circulars are issued in some provinces calling upon officials not to be influenced at all by requests in individual cases from Legislators. At the same time, the officer knows that the Minister, except in a very few instances, is not at all likely to be happy if prominent supporters are displeased. Consequently, even when an exceptionally conscientious man deals with everything exactly on merits and refuses to allow himself to be influenced at all, he often does so knowing that anything may happen. He may continue without the least disturbance or it may speedily be found that his abilities could be better employed elsewhere. This is indeed a very grave evil. It is prevalent to a lesser or greater degree in most parts of the country, the degree depending upon the outlook of the Ministers and the number of conscientious officers available.

From the influencability of Ministers there follows another danger, that of the "slick" officer who attempts to ingratiate himself with the Legislator by doing him favours and anticipating his wishes in order to use him, that is, his influence with the Ministry, for his own advancement. Of such too, in many places, examples are not lacking.

The only real remedy for this state of affairs lies in raising the calibre of the Legislators, the sense of responsibility of the Minister and the character of the officer. The first two again really depend on the selection of candidates by the political parties, for it is from these candidates that the Legislators will be elected and from the Legislators the Ministers will be chosen. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that men of character, capable of disinterested approach to problems and of deciding matters on merits even against themselves should be selected as candidates. It is true that such men are not often prominent in political life. They are to be found among the followers rather than the leaders, but the future of the

country depends on how large a proportion of our new M.L.As. and M.Ps. belong to this class. It is for the Parliamentary Boards to make a real effort to select, as far as possible, only such people.

To such of the officers as have imbibed fully the old tradition of impartial service, decision on merits comes naturally. Some of these, however, have since learnt to be courtiers. Among officers recently promoted to higher positions of responsibility, apprehension of results and expectation of favours are often decisive. Recruits to the youngest service seem to have acquired more of the tradition of the old service. In this matter, however, the responsibility finally rests upon the Ministry. A Government will in the long run get the servants it deserves, though the inculcation of high standards of behaviour among government servants, more especially the juniors by the seniors, may help to preserve healthy traditions and make degeneration less easy for quite a long time.

Nothing perhaps tends to bring a Government or party so completely into disrepute as the feeling that the strings are being pulled by wealthy interests and that Ministers and leaders posture and mouth according as they are played upon by their masters. Dangerous as the association of politics with wealth is at any time, it becomes particularly dangerous when wealth takes the form of large industrial and speculative interests and the necessities of the time involve a great deal of interference by Government in commerce and industry. The intelligent public dreads this close association, because it knows well that, however, noble Government's declarations may be, in the end these interests will use it as they desire. From this there devolves a very special responsibility on Ministers. Their conduct must be such as to give no room for any feeling that any special interest is likely to have an undue influence over them. However close friendship with such interests may have been before acceptance of office, circumstances necessitate extremely correct behaviour thereafter. Thus no question should arise of being the guests of, or living in the houses of, individuals representing such interests. This should be the rule even as regards thoroughly respectable individuals. Very much more so should this be the case when the persons concerned are generally reputed to behave in an anti-social manner. In the state of our laws it may not be possible to hang influential black-marketeers and tax-evaders from the lamp

posts, but it is certainly within every Minister's capacity not to consult them. to show them no favours, to avoid having social contact with them. to refuse to make speeches at gatherings where they take a leading part or to accept purses from them.

It is not unusual to find in the Central Capital and elsewhere public servants being entertained by individuals or firms who have, have had. or are likely to have. request to make to them. There is no special reason why such entertainment should be accepted. While it may not result in corruption. it is likely to induce a frame of mind favourable to the acceptance of the requests made. Such entertainment invariably causes talk and it is desirable that Government should set its face firmly against it.

A word needs to be said about the tours of officers and Ministers. These can on occasions cause considerable demoralisation and corruption:—

> "Ministers should be the first to set an example in this matter. We are told that, in the past, on occasion their visits to the headquarters of a district have thrown a considerable additional burden on the Taluqdar, as they sometimes travel without making their own arrangements and rely on the Taluqdar to provide all supplies. The practice of touring without payment needs firm checking at all levels. and we trust Government will make offenders realise that it will not do to disobey its orders on this point. Honest service can hardly be expected from subordinates if they are called upon to spend large sums for the entertainment of their superiors on tour. In such cases. they have no recourse but to fall back on assistance from the rich or levy contribution on the poor. The rich man will not pay unless he gets some return. and the poor. except under duress." (page 96. Chapter XIV, Hyderabad Economy Committee Report).

CHAPTER V

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

OCCASIONALLY, some responsible people, with almost a wistful air, wish that there had been a violent end to the British period. A clean break, they think, would have enabled them to build up a fresh edifice without being cluttered up with the vestiges of the past. They are prepared to agree that much that is valuable would have been lost in the process but on the credit side they account the fact that there would have been no services to deal with. The services are to them a great source of irritation. It must be made clear that the number of such people is not large. The majority hold that the services form a useful instrument which has done its work adequately and is quite capable of doing even better work in future for the welfare of the State. Yet although the intellect admits this, past memory rebels against it. Whence arise incidents like that of the Congress Economic Committee Bulletin ascribing to civil servants all the misfortunes of the present time or the occasional abuse of civil servants generally or by name in legislatures. To one not fully acquainted with the Indian background, more especially the recent past, it may seem surprising, if not almost incredible, that the problem of psychological maladjustment between the different components of administration—the ministers, legislators and administrators—has become really acute after, and not before, the end of British rule and that today, a little over four years after the transfer of power, this maladjustment remains one of the biggest obstacles to good administration. Nevertheless the statement is true. The only qualification it may need is that this mal-adjustment is a short-term problem. There is no reason to believe, more especially provided there is a reasonable approach on all sides, that it will continue for long a major problem.

During the latter part of the British rule there existed too a maladjustment. Then it was between the rulers, including perhaps some of the senior elements in the services, and the ruled. This maladjustment lay in want of accord in objectives, manner of thinking, and approach to problems and played a considerable part in bringing

about the end of British rule. It gave rise to a political problem. The present maladjustment is not political. With independence, the political problem disappeared but the remnants of political maladjustment have, in conjunction with other factors, given rise to an important problem in administration. Some such problem was, of course, always to be expected in the circumstances attendant on the transfer of power. Perhaps, however, it would not have assumed its present importance if simultaneously with the transfer, there had not been a somewhat changed conception of the responsibilities and aims of Government. Our ideal is now a Welfare State and we are inclined to judge our instruments according to their fitness for the performance of the tasks that must inevitably follow from a Welfare State, however distant in actual approach the realisation of that State may be. The real point is that today, on the whole, the administrative set-up seems to have become less homogenous than in the past and there seem to be more and not less occasions for friction. Recognising always that this can only be transitory, we must still attempt to understand the situation if we are to limit its duration. Such limitation is, of course, most necessary in the interests of the country. While it is not unusual in many parts of the country to hear in private enthusiastic appreciation of the work of individual ministers by government servants and of the work of individual government servants by ministers, it would be idle to deny that though working together for a common end, there is still generally speaking a feeling of separateness in the minds of both sections of public servants. Not all Ministers have become accustomed to regard the machine as part of themselves. They still look upon it as something outside. They may be responsible constitutionally for it but they do not feel that it belongs to them.

It must be recognised that it takes a magnanimous mind to forget that while it and its class was suffering deprivation of freedom and intense privation, the servants who now take their orders from its members and call them Sir, were living comparatively luxurious lives in the service of those whom it regarded as its oppressers. Magnanimity unfortunately is not a very common quality, although it should be recognised that it is more often among the second rank of politicians that this feeling of difference persists than among the first. To this cause of separateness which lies in past history must be added what may be termed the professional reason. In the Minister

this often takes the form of want of experience, in the government servant of want of adaptability. The best of Ministers is filled with a burning zeal. He wishes to alter things, to make them different, he wants to build nearer to his heart's desire. The best of civil servants performs his duty zealously. He must point out the snags in the Minister's policy. He must give advice according to his lights. He must suggest consideration and examination. It is scarcely surprising that in the circumstances a certain amount of friction arises, more especially, when either one or the other or both do not belong to the category which may be termed the best. Then it is that want of experience begins to be termed ignorance by the one and the absence of adaptability, woodenness by the other.

As if this was not enough, we have in most State social differences. The standards and ways of living of the Minister differ in varying degree from that of the high official. The point is not that either is better but that they are different and men who live differently are often inclined to think differently. Social contacts between the classes as a whole are limited indeed, though between certain individuals they may be quite frequent.

Another complication which makes things extremely difficult in some places is the desire of every one to have a place in the sun. The legislator feels that it is not enough that the Minister who has been chosen from amongst his ranks should exercise power. He too must have his share. The influential party man outside the legislature is not content that the Minister should have power and the legislator influence. He feels that he too took part in the struggle and has a great deal to contribute to the actual running of the country. It is unfortunately true that not very many legislators or party men have devoted themselves to their real task of educating the masses, attempting to guide them in the right direction, explaining to them Government's difficulties, the policies it is pursuing and their part in making successful of those policies. The continuous transmission of ideas from the Government to the electorate, the keeping in touch with the constituency which is so important to the legislator and the influential party man in other countries, does not seem to occupy much of the time of their co-evils here. Even the reading of letters from constituents seems a burden to some. The official has always been accustomed to a direct chain of responsibility. It is his

nature to be accountable to those put by law above him. When he finds that in addition to those legal authorities he must also hold himself accountable in greater or lesser degree to the legislators from his constituency, to the influential party man in his district, he is inclined to get nettled and disheartened. If he is a conscientious man, he struggles to maintain the constitutional position. If he is strong and the Ministry is forbearing he succeeds. If he is weak, he succumbs but after a time. If he is not conscientious, he succumbs quickly and begins to be guided more and more by the local dignitaries to the detriment often of justice and fair-play. In any case, conscientious or otherwise, strong or weak, there is a feeling of resentment left in his mind.

As against these tendencies that cause separateness, one very important factor makes for unity of feeling. Events and time have dealt with those amongst the services who were in some sense the political opponents of the present Government. They have disappeared. Those who remain are the relatively "Young" and the formative ideology of their youth was very much the same as that of the politician. Consequently on general principles and aims there is no essential difference between the two. An analogy from another country may explain the position better. One of the principal reasons, for the inability of a really socialist government to operate in England without a revolution was, according to so acute an observer as Prof. Laski, that the higher civil servants, brought up in the old tradition of great respect for private property, would not allow socialist doctrine to be worked out in practice. What Prof. Laski failed to realise was that by the time a socialist government came into power, socialist ideology had exercised considerable influence on the younger generation and had sufficiently modified its values, so that it found nothing tremendously revolutionary or abhorrent in the socialist view of property. A change of a similar nature in political ideology had permeated the mind of the educated Indian during at least a quarter of a century, so that the accession to power of their own countrymen met an enthusiastic reception from the government servants who remained. Fundamentally, therefore, there is no divergence. Hence there is good reason to think that the present maladjustment is essentially a short-term problem.

From the point of view of the public interest, however, it is serious enough to necessitate further analysis of the relationship between the Minister and the government servant, for from such analysis only can remedies be suggested.

Lack of understanding, generally speaking, of their respective roles is perhaps the most fertile cause of friction and misunderstanding. In a Parliamentary system of government of the British type there is a place for the Minister, a place for the Secretary, a place for the Head of a Department and a place for the Executive Officer. Everyone of them is essential and everyone has his proper part to play. The Minister's functions, for instance, are the formulation of policy and the superintendence of its implementation. The first he discharges along with his colleagues and with the help of his Secretary. The bulk of the second he delegates to the Secretary and to the Head of the Department, keeping an over-seeing eye on the whole position. The Secretary's task is to help in the formulation of policy, to formulate "subsidiary" policy and to assist the Minister in superintendence and implementation. The exact implications of this division of labour will be dealt with later. Here it suffices to emphasise that it will conduce greatly to the efficiency and despatch of public business and the establishment of cordial relations if all concerned understand their respective spheres and refrain from encroachment on those that legitimately lie within the duty of others.

Another not infrequent reason for discouragement on the part of the government servant is the dictatorial attitude adopted by some Ministers. Thus for instance, a minister will sometimes invite an order on a carefully worked out proposal in the simple words "I don't agree". He will give no indication of his reasons for disagreement. In fact it would seem as if he regarded the previous noting as a piece of insolence which should not have appeared on the file. again, occasionally, arbitrary decisions are not unknown. If on similar facts in two or more cases the decisions are different, work becomes difficult for a conscientious government servant. He does not quite know where he stands. Similarly, decisions based on interest rather than on merit are likely to contribute to strained relations. In the present circumstances, the advantage in point of knowledge and experience, generally speaking, is likely to be on the

side of the official. This too is apt to create awkwardness as it sometimes leads to a feeling that the official is adopting an attitude of superiority.

As regards government servants, intellectual arrogance has, of course, always been the besetting sin of their highest ranks. In the circumstances of the present time, a very special duty rests upon such of them as are inclined to be occasionally affected by it to avoid it altogether. In this sin perhaps is the orgin of the habit formed by some government servants of comment in social conversation upon the abilities and idiosyncrasies of ministers. This seems to have attracted unfavourable comment in ministerial circles in many parts of the country. Freedom of private conversation is, of course, always desirable, nor was conversation of such a nature altogether unusual in the past, but since the effect of its transmission has obviously some not altogether desirable repercussions, there should be no difficulty in avoiding it, more especially, when no purpose is served by such discussion in social circles.

It is also a habit with some government servants to criticise in their social moments in the hearing of outsiders, the policies of Government with which they disagree. Now the proper forum for the expression of opinions about a policy is at the stage of giving advice to the minister before its formulation. Then an officer has a perfect right to say quite frankly what he feels about it. Once, however, the policy has been accepted after due deliberation and has become the policy of Government, criticism by a government servant outside the range of his official duties, is likely to be misunderstood and must be avoided.

Another reason sometimes given for the absence of warmth and cordiality between some Ministers and some government servants is what is termed the unresponsiveness of some government servants. it is said that they behave with the same formalism as in the past and that they do not seem to feel with a real sense of urgency the need of the great change that must take place in the life of the country. The observance of due formality is by no means a bad thing for persons occupying public positions. What is really essential is that an officer should treat everybody with complete courtesy, be prepared to listen patiently to suggestions and cooperate wholeheartedly in carrying out such as in his judgment appear to be for

the public weal. It is of course obvious that there is no room in modern administration for an attitude of aloof superiority. The first duty of the government servant is full acceptance of the fact that he is the servant of the public, that the public is in a very real sense his master and that he only exists for the purpose of serving its true interests. The addition of zeal to efficiency is accordingly most desirable, but where responsiveness involves hopeful elation and enthusiasm, the official by his very nature and training, cannot but be somewhat backward. Since this is a point frequently raised, it is interesting to see what Sir Edward Bridges has to say about it:—

> "A civil servant's life makes him above all, a realist. He is less easily elated, less readily discouraged than most men by everyday happenings. Outwardly he may appear cynical or disillusioned, and perhaps to be disinclined to put up a fight for things which excite others. but that is because he has learnt by experience that the Walls of Jericho do not nowadays fall flat even after seven circumambulations to the sound of the trumpet, and that many of the results which he wants to see come about in the most unexpected of ways—Once the crust of apparent disillusion is pierced, you will find a man who feels with the fiercest intensity for those things which he has learnt to cherish—those things, that is to say, which a lifetime of experience has impressed upon him as matters which are of vital concern for the continued well-being of the community".

From all that has been said it is clear that the problem of maladjustment is one of misunderstanding rather than of any real difference of opinion as to aims and objectives. There is very considerable need for the best minds on both sides to come closer together. It may well be that if they do, separateness will disappear and in its place will be engendered feelings of the deepest cordiality.

One thing which would aid very largely in this matter would be a clearer understanding of the position of ministerial responsibility. The constitutional responsibility of ministers to parliament and the public covers every action of their subordinates, whether done with their specific authority or by delegation, expressed or implied. Accordingly in the legislatures of several other countries, it is the

custom never to mention as responsible subordinate officials or even a whole department. It is the minister who is responsible. He takes the praise for that which is well done; and the blame for that which is ill done is his. So far as responsibility goes, the minister is the department. If there have been mistakes or malafide practices, it is for him to take action against the officers. They are not to be exposed to attacks in the legislature or elsewhere.

The acceptance of this convention would be of great value in the circumstances, of this country, where in some legislatures the unedifying spectacle is not uncommon of officers being black-guarded by name by legislators with ministers either listening unmoved or putting up occasional not too enthusiastic protests. So, too, the attacks on government servants by organs of the political party in power serve no useful purpose. All that they do is to dishearten government servants and make them lose confidence in their masters. There should be no need in a well-constituted State for the certificate which the Prime Minister or other member of the Cabinet feels compelled to give from time to time to the good work of government servants as a rebuff to the allegations made against them by members of their own party.

All concerned—ministers, legislators and the people—must recognise that there is no way of doing without the government servant. He is essential and has to stay. Without him the work of government cannot be done. Consequently, it is in the interests of all concerned that he should have confidence in, and be encouraged to work for the benefit of, his employer, the State.

A suggestion has sometimes been made that it would perhaps be better to appoint to senior posts in the government service *e.g.* Secretary to Government, Collector etc., public men, that is, politicians of standing in place of the permanent servants holding those appointments now. The view urged is that since the rousing of enthusiasm is likely to be a valuable factor in the work of government in future, public men would be in a better position to fulfil that function than permanent servants; also they being of the same class as members of the Government, the homogeneity of the system would be increased. Responsible opinion seemed to be almost unanimously against this proposal. It was pointed out that experience

was an essential part of administration and that public men so selected would never have that experience. Such men would have to be at least of the age of 45, if they were to be public men of any standing capable of achieving the object for which they were to be appointed. Once they were appointed they would cease to be public men and their capacity for arousing enthusiasm would also diminish. Very few public men would moreover like to accept appointments which in many cases meant hours of tedious table work with the power of decision vested elsewhere. If appointed for a term, their stake in the work would be little and there could be very little hold over them. All in all, the idea seemed to most people a transition to the spoils system, which almost every one agreed would be fatal to good administration.

Since then it seems fairly clear that the overwhelming weight of opinion regards public service as a proper life career, senior government servants have a very special duty to discharge. They must see that when they pass on the torch to their successors, they have made certain that they will be able to hold it aloft at least as high and carry it at least as speedily as they did themselves. Inheritors of the I.C.S. tradition will recollect the trouble and pains their seniors, though of another race and country, took to train them in their earlier years. It is true that theirs is a dying race, but in the new administrative service they have their legitimate successors and it is but proper that wherever they may be, whether in the Central or Provincial capitals or in the mofussil, they should devote, even at considerable inconvenience, time and energy, officially and socially, to transmit to the young men who are to follow them all those ideas of right, fair dealing, sound behaviour, thorough work, independent thinking and impartiality without which in its servants no State can flourish and no service discharge its responsibilities as it should. So, too, senior officers of every kind must regard it as one of their normal functions to fit their successors to take their places.

CHAPTER VI

REFORM AND REORGANISATION

In the last decade, hardly ever have two years passed without some report becoming available at the Centre or in the Provinces on the subject of administrative reorganisation and reform. These reports have dealt with matters such as the structural improvement of the administrative machine, more efficient methods of personnel management and better and quicker ways of operation. To mention only a few of the most recent, there is the Bengal Administration Enquiry Committee Report, 1944-45, the Government of India Officer Shortage Committee Report of 1947, the Government of India Reorganisation of Machinery of Government Report of 1949 and the Hyderabad Economy Committee Report of 1950. All these reports contain valuable recommendations regarding the action to be taken. They tell us what to do and what they tell us to do is for the most part worth doing. The broad trends of reforms recommended are generally similar, with a few exceptions, sometimes but not always relatable to local conditions. Broadly speaking then, it would appear that what has to be done is known and in some cases has been begun but the general defect is that action over the whole field has not been taken and pursued with vigour and determination. The will and direction which may be strong enough and clear enough when government accepts a report and resolves to implement it seem with the passage of time to get weakened, obscured and dissipated. Thus the Bengal Committee Report pathetically points out that the replies received to their enquiry as to the fate that had overtaken the reports of the Committees which had preceded them during the last 20 years showed " that the deliberations of our predecessors have had little influence on the course of events. In one of the replies sent to us relating to a Committee which reported some five years ago, it was stated that one of its recommendations was receiving the attention of government and that another was under the earnest consideration of government. It is a sad commentary on govermental methods of work that five years should elapse before a firm decision is taken one way or the other on the recommendations of a Committee".

The Bengal Committee thought that in order to get the recommendations of a Committee implemented there should be a special authority in charge. But reforms are not implemented, much less originated and pursued, merely because an authority has been formally designated for the purpose. The tendency of all organisations is to continue on the lines on which they are rather than to alter direction. Change always has to overcome a great deal of inertia. Having regard to past history, what seems necessary is not so much to think out novel proposals as to ensure that the impulse to reform and reorganise which must be personal in the last analysis—exists and will continue to be transmitted not only through the machinery of the Central Government but through the co-ordinated machinery of governments throughout the country. This is particularly necessary because of the acuteness of the short-term administrative problem, its co-existence over the whole of India and the impracticability of dealing with certain of its more important aspects on other than an all-India basis.

The short-fall in administrative efficiency may be compared to the shortage in food. It is a problem of similar gravity, dimension and public import. Accordingly, it cannot be successfully dealt with unless, as ought to be with the problem of food, there is central intervention, drive and coordination. The States must come into line with the Centre by persuasion, if possible, by pressure, otherwise. The drive and the pressure, the coordination and the persuation must obviously emanate at the highest level, and unless it is made the whole-time business of one, or more than one, at that level to tackle the short-term problem, there is little hope of its successful solution. The person or persons called to take on this duty should remain unburdened with routine. At the Centre, there should be assigned for this purpose a Minister Without Portfolio and a Secretary without a Department, the Minister an Elder Statesman notable for integrity and with weight in his own party and the Secretary a very senior officer commanding the respect of the Services. In these two would be combined the wisdom, experience and authority of both the political and the administrative fields. Unencumbered by files and day-to-day work and without any office except purely personal secretarial staff, they would be able to devote full attention to the problems that really matter.

This Board of two would generate the drive and direction needed for constant adaptation of Central and States Governments to such structural forms, administrative methods, etc. as have been designed for bringing about greater administrative efficiency. It would also ensure realistic correlation between personnel and policies. Further it would treat personnel on an all-India basis and allot it according to policy priorities and regional needs. It would maintain constant vigilance regarding integrity and would assist in the removal of misunderstanding between the political and administrative spheres. It would tour fairly vigorously over the country, talk to responsible people confidentially and on equal terms and in addition to its specific functions mentioned above, always be willing to use its good offices to assist in the solution of any administrative problem that might arise. The counterpart of this Board in the States would be the Chief Minister and the Chief Secretary. The Chief Secretary would have to be a carefully selected officer and to be relieved of many routine duties. For Part B States where there is a Regional Commissioner, it would perhaps be desirable to use him for this work instead of the Chief Secretary. There has already been considerable discussion in previous chapters about most of the functions that it is suggested should fall to the Board. The rest of this chapter deals with certain broad and illustrative matters which must be the subject of administrative reform.

It is usual to refer to the administrative "machine". This is correct in so far as it consists of distinct parts which together make a whole. To the extent that each part functions efficiently, the machine as a whole will be efficient. But the components of administration are human beings. Hence, unlike a machine, one part can encroach on another leading to considerable friction and deterioration. Assuming that the machine of administration, composed of human beings, has been designed correctly, its success may be said to depend upon each part, confining itself to its legitimate duties and each part performing its legitimate duties efficiently. Where the first does not happen, the problem presented is usually one of failure of organisation, but where the breakdown is in respect of the second, there is generally failure of method or failure of the personnel factor or of both. In any of these contingencies the result is inefficiency. The product, good administration, is not delivered at all or is forthcoming after considerable delay. Inevitably, its quality is impaired.

Inefficiency, then, may result from faulty relation between two units or from faulty functioning within the unit itself. Many instances of both types of inefficiency can be given and usefully discussed. A few of the more important are considered below in some detail.

The trespass of one unit on another is discussed with reference to the relations between the Secretariat and the Executive Department, the Finance Ministry and the Administrative Ministry, the Minister and the Secretary, etc. In dealing with faulty functioning within the unit, attention is chiefly concentrated on the gravest of these faults, delay, and instances are drawn from the Secretariat and the districts with reference to both methods and personal factors.

One of the best examples of an organisational defect in which one branch of the administration encroaches on the functions of the other is furnished by the relationship between the Secretariat, that is, the Ministry, and the head of the department working under it. Here although the limits of action of both are very well known, the Ministry being responsible for the formulation of policy, and the department for its implementation, yet often so great is the anxiety of the Ministry to see the work carried out that it continuously interferes. The result is that the head of the department is deprived of all initiative and instead of being allowed to attend to and make progress with his own work, has to spend a great deal of time submitting unnecessary reports, explaining the position in individual matters to the Ministry and getting its orders on points which lie well within his own sphere of authority. The attempt by a Ministry to do the work of the head of a department invariably ends in inefficiency and failure. The work is delayed, it gets badly done, and when things go wrong, there is no single person who can be held responsible. The departmental chief and other officers lose heart and all that occurs is waste of time, men and material ending in lack of success of policy. It would be infinitely better to let the departmental head do his own work, keeping an eye on it from a distance and asking for periodical reports to see how things were going. If by such behaviour the Ministry won the confidence of the departmental head he would of his own accord bring in good time such difficulties in which he wanted the Ministry's assistance to it, instead of grudgingly resenting it as he does, when, continuously harassed.

If the desire is that work should be done well, the rule should be "allot it to a man, fix his authority and let him have a free hand within that authority. Give advice only when absolutely necessary. Note carefully, without interference, how the work is being done. If the man is not satisfactory, change him, but don't interfere unnecessarily".

The difficulties of some heads of departments have been increased by the failure of their Ministries to handle the Secretariat side of their schemes themselves. When a matter has to go to two or three Ministries, it would seem to become more and more frequent for the Ministry in charge instead of seeing it through the Secretariat itself to request the head of the department to go to the various Ministries concerned and persuade them as to the validity of these proposals. This is an encroachment from the other side, may be an encroachment by request, but just as much to be avoided as the first kind of encroachment. A Ministry ought to be able to deal with its fellow Ministries without bringing heads of departments into the discussion except as regards absolutely essential details: otherwise, the technical man's time is wasted to no purpose. So too the Ministry ought to be able to convince its own Minister and get orders from him without continuously worrying the head of the department. It ought not normally speaking to get him involved in heated discussions with the Minister. The proper person to take responsibility and advise the Minister is the Secretary. Textile control in recent years furnishes a good example of all the defects that should be avoided in such a relationship.

An instance of complete encroachment by the Secretariat on the department is the abolition of Commissioners in certain areas without substituting in their place a Board of Revenue or other similar authority. It is sometimes argued that this is a measure of decentralisation. In other words, power which was with the Commissioner is, by this abolition, passed on to the lower authority, the Collector The reality of the Commissioner's power, however, goes not to the Collector but to the higher authority, the Secretariat and the disposal of work, instead of becoming quicker and more thorough, is often rendered slower and more superficial. At a time when district officials are so often young and inexperienced, there is much to be said for having a body of senior officers who can not only guide them

on occasion but be a strong barrier between them and the shocks that come from both above and below. For work to be done efficiently, the Revenue Department, like every other department, must have a single head and a Board of Revenue at headquarters constitutes "a body of experts in administration whose collective advice would be available to government at short notice". There have, of course, been variations in the quality of Commissioners in different periods and it may be that one of the principal reasons that led to abolition in certain States was the calibre of the individuals concerned. The recognition of the difference between institutions and persons is an important element of administration. Persons come and go, while institutions continue to render useful service and the destruction of an institution because of dislike for or inability of the incumbent for the time being is obviously not in accord with sound administrative practice.

Another very important organisational defect which has added very greatly to the difficulties of administration is to be found in the relationship between the Administrative Ministries and the Finance Ministry. There are many bitter complaints, some of them perhaps rather one-sided, against what is termed the woodenness and lack of discrimination of the Finance Ministry at the Centre. The Finance Ministry, it is said, centralises in itself the power of sanction, and even for small amounts of expenditure the administrative departments have to go to the Finance Ministry. Quite often, after many references to and fro, the administrative department drops the proposal, having come to the conclusion that the trouble in continuing to refer is greater than the object to be served by the expenditure. This does not mean that the expenditure is not worthwhile but merely that the referring officer is tired out. If the proposal is taken to a sufficiently high level, the expenditure is generally accepted. The process of taking it is often extremely burdensome. It would seem desirable to delegate certain financial powers to administrative Ministries and heads of departments for contingent expenditure within the budget provision. If the delegation already exists, it should be enforced, i.e., steps should be taken to ensure that it is known and practised. Further, the possibility of enlarged delegation should be investigated. Thus, Administrative Ministries might perhaps be allowed to sanction temporary appointments up to a

certain limit of pay and up to a period of six months and to sanction expenditure on minor works within the monetary limit. A sample check could be held once a year to ascertain if these powers had been in any way abused.

The Financial Adviser looks after the financial work that comes from groups of Ministries. In addition, there is another Joint Secretary's Branch in the Finance Ministry which deals with establishment matters generally. When a Ministry raises an establishment matter, it refers it first to its Financial Adviser who after expressing his view sends it to the Joint Secretary dealing with the establishment work for financial decision. That Branch, it is said, quite often differs from the view of the Financial Adviser. It seems unnecessary to have two financial experts to advise on the same matter. If the reference to the Finance Ministry proper is for the purpose of obtaining coordination on matters of pay, allowances, etc., surely the Financial Advisers could be given the necessary instructions. They function on all financial points for the Ministries to which they are accredited, and could deal with this matter also, thus eliminating a great deal of delay.

Preliminary selection of officers for the Finance Ministry and their subsequent training are both matters of great concern. Not of course every Accounts Officer, any more than every Administrative Officer, can be successful in the Finance Ministry. The officers specially chosen for the Finance Ministry should be selected sufficiently early in their service lives. They should have wide experience, a broad outlook and a fair amount of knowledge of government machinery as a whole. Experience circumscribed to one particular branch results in narrowness of mind. It has been suggested that it is desirable that such of the present incumbents of the Finance Ministry as have not served in any administrative ministry should be sent to ordinary administrative appointments for periods varying from two to three years, their places being filled from among persons holding those or other administrative appointments. This ought to be of benefit to both the parties and might be tried.

What is really needed in financial matters is control and not interference. What would seem to be happening is exasperating interference in small matters leading to a great deal of waste of time, energy and frustration on the part of the administrative departments,

that is, the greater part of government. This must be avoided. It is heartening to note that in the States generally, relations between the administrative departments and finance seem to be much more cordial. This is probably due to the fact that, States Secretariats being smaller and housed in one building, contact between the Secretaries is much greater and any matter tending to become difficult can be discussed straightaway. So too, officers lower down are likely to meet more frequently and matters can be settled fairly easily. Even if the proposal is not sanctioned, since reasonable explanation is generally available, there is no feeling of frustration.

It is sometimes stated that at the Centre it is now becoming difficult to distinguish between what is or is not a financial matter, for even when there is no financial implication, Finance Department expresses views. This seems undesirable.

In hardly any sphere can lack of harmony destroy efficiency and render proper working so difficult as in that comprised in the Minister-Secretary relationship. As we have seen, the Minister is the person constitutionally responsible for both the formulation and the execution of policy. No Minister can, however, do all the work in this himself. If he attempts it, he is bound to fail. There is a sphere which is markedly his and there is another which belongs to his principal adviser, the permanent head of the department.

Public administration can, of course, be regarded as clerical service under a political head. In the earlier years of the growth of a political system this conception is possible but as the functions of administration expand, it becomes extremely inadequate. What it means is that in effect the Minister combines in himself all knowledge and decision. The officials are merely the putters up of reports received and the takers down of his spoken word. If such a system were to prevail it would be quite unnecessary to have highly qualified men as public servants. No man above the rank of an Assistant Secretary would be necessary. This system was worked with success in the Moghul days when the Emperor received reports and issued orders, the copier of his spoken words, the *Chitthi Navis*, passing them on. The cabinet system of government laid down by the Constitution for India is, however, something quite different. The assumption in it is that the Minister's work is mainly politcal. He is a member of a political party; the term of office of his party is

always subject to the will of the electorate, which must be consulted after a period of years. Even if the party returns to power again and again it may be that the same man will not hold the same portfolio or even be in the Ministry. The Minister is thus not permanent. He is also generally a layman, often either without any administrative experience at all or without experience of governmental administration. Hence the need for experienced assistance of the highest quality. Unlike the Minister, the permanent civil servant is definitely non-political. "He serves with equal fidelity under governments of different hue merely watching the stream of political life flow past him without ever dipping into it except to vote".

The basic feature of the system is "the association together of an amateur, lay, political, non-permanent directing body and an expert, professional, non-political, permanent subordinate staff. The former provides the democratic element in administration, the latter the bureaucratic. Both are essential, one of them to make a government popular, the other to make it efficient, and the test of a good government is its sucessful combination of these two qualities". The final decision is always with the Minister. He issues directions and instructions and it is he who determines policy, but in doing this he must seek advice from his department. "Well aware of their superiority in experience, and sometimes in ability as well, the permanent Under Secretaries and other members of the permanent staff, commonly have no hesitation about putting forward their own suggestions, arguments and admonitions. Of course no Minister ever acknowledges any obligation to accept and act upon the views of his subordinates, however urgently pressed. The last thing that he would surrender would be the right to make decisions himself". Sir Edward Bridges puts it in another way. "It is", he says, "a cardinal feature of British administration that no attempt should be made to formulate a new policy in any matter without the fullest consultation with those who have practical experience in that field, and with those who will be called upon to carry it out". Thus is British experience summed up.

Now one of the most difficult things to learn is the ability to take advice from one's subordinates, advice which may often go very much against one's own predilections, without resentment and without letting it cause prejudice against the adviser. Independent views

will not continue to be offered if they are received with displeasure or sullenness. The natural reaction to this in many men will be to find out in advance what the Minister thinks about the particular matter and to say it to him as coming from themselves. Only the exceptional person has his own standards and lives up to them. Most people are content to live down to their superior's standards. Nor is it only by saying that frank advice is welcomed that it will be received. If the officer feels that when following upon the invitation, he gives the advice, it really causes displeasure or comes up against a stone-wall, it will not generally be offered. It is unfortunate, but so far as one can make out, standards in this respect have fallen considerably throughout the country. In many places Ministers definitely do not want independent advice; in many others they say they want it but react to it in such a way that it is quite clear that they dislike it. There are also of course quite a number of officers who are only too anxious to please their Ministers and tell them exactly what they like to hear. The soil of this country is beyond doubt congenial to all that can be comprehensively summed up under the term "Durbari" and it needs a very real appreciation of responsibilities on the part of both the Minister and the Secretary to combine that cooperation in frankness and desire to serve, which alone will bring forward the best fruits of this system. Says the Hyderabad Economy Committee: "It should be remembered that there is no more fertile cause of wrong decisions than the desire of officials to please political chiefs in high position by saying what the officials think their chiefs would like to hear. In their own interest, accordingly, Ministers would be well advised to have as their advisers men capable of independent judgment and frank expression of views 'Yes-men' are easy to find and pleasant to work with. They anticipate the Minister's wishes in any particular matter, and are only too happy to assure him beforehand of the wisdom and the beneficence of the course he wishes to pursue. They lead the country through him into loss and danger, which may on occasion prove ruinous. It is only in the clash of minds that the real merits of any matter can become apparent, and a wise Minister will give every opportunity to his senior officials, as indeed a wise senior officer will to his juniors, to express their views freely, however much they differ from his own, in order thereby to test the validity of his own propositions and the possibility of their application. The right to order belongs to

the chief, the right to represent and to advise, so that orders are issued only after full consideration, is as inalienably that of the senior officer. If a democratic Government is to function well, not the least of its safeguards must be the right of the official to speak freely on any matter that may come before him in the course of official duty, without fear and without incurring the displeasure of his chief".

Modern cabinets in most countries reach their decisions on consideration by their members of papers dealing with particular subjects put up by the Ministry concerned. The practice, in some countries is for the Minister to sign the note, though of course, it is prepared in his Ministry and in others for the Secretary or the permanent head of department to sign the note, which contains an indication that the Minister has seen and approved it for issue. The proper preparation of these papers is a matter of the greatest importance. They must contain all the facts, they must present them accurately and clearly, they must state all the arguments for and against the particular advocated course, they must not attempt to overstress the advantages or understress the disadvantages to suit the view finally recommended. Most important issues may be involved and these papers are often the only authoritative basis on which the members of the Cabinet must rely in coming to a decision. Now it may sometimes happen that an over-enthusiastic Minister in the desire to get his own policy accepted may be inclined to insist that all or some of these rules be not observed in the preparation of the note to Cabinet. The Secretary's position in such a case is extremely delicate. There have been very rare instances in other countries in which when the issues were of fundamental importance, and the Secretary differed from the Minister and felt that the Minister's paper did not set out the departmental point of view properly, he asked for and was accorded the Minister's permission to circulate to a few of the Minister's colleagues his own note on the subject. Normally, however, this would not be possible and as between many Ministers and Secretaries, such a request might lead to a complete breach. At the same time, it is scarcely desirable that the Secretary should convey his views privately to the Minister's colleagues. To guard against the exceptional case, it might be worthwhile stating quite clearly and categorically in the Cabinet rules of business the conditions which such notes must fulfil.

It is natural that Ministers new to office, following a regime which to them represented something evil and which they regarded as having caused tremendous grievances to the ordinary people should on coming into power, wish to look into everything themselves. Four years have now passed, experience has been gained and it should be realised that whatever the regime, if proper procedure is not followed in official work, instead of it being hastened, it is delayed and instead of grievances being redressed, they are increased. Orders have been issued in some States that applications should be made to the authorities competent to deal with them in the first instance rather than to Ministers. However, large numbers of applications to Ministers continue to pour in. They are sent sometimes for disposal and sometimes for report. In either case, they upset very considerably the time-table of the officers for, since they come from the Minister, they have to be dealt with before others and conseqntly those who apply directly get unfair treatment to that extent. Some applications are of course specially from people known to the Minister. The Linskey tribunal says about applications sent down directly by a Minister to the official who should deal with them instead of going through the normal course :

> "This meant that any application would be dealt with more expeditiously and might result, if the question was in the balance, in the making of a favourable decision which might otherwise have been adverse."

Clearly, this practice is most undesirable.

While the Cabinet procedure and the obligations of the democratic system make it necessary perhaps for the Minister to see more of the ordinary work of the department than before, he should, in justice both to himself and to his subordinates, confine himself to matters of real importance or involving departures in policy. Once a decision on a particular set of facts has been taken, no case involving the same sort of facts need be put up to him again. A good Minister will keep himself in touch with all the important matters that are happening in his office by having a regular time for meeting his Secretary everyday, but he will leave his Secretary initiative and not attempt, to see or do everything. By this means, he will give himself time to attend to his Cabinet, parliamentary, political and

social duties and while retaining general supervision not get clogged in a mass of files. The relationship between a Minister and Secretary can subsist only on the basis of trust. If the Minister does not trust his Secretary, the Secretary should be transferred elsewhere. There is no point in his staying and the Minister's attempting to do his work.

The Secretary's obligations in respect of his position too are very clear: "When Tzu Lu asked what constituted a man's duty to his Prince, the Master said 'Never deceive him and then you may boldly withstand him' ". The Master said "Can love be other than exacting, or loyalty refrain from admonition?" These may be said to sum up to a certain extent his position. In addition, since he is expert, he must spare no pains to learn and to know. Any neglect and ignorance which prevents his equipping himself to give the best advice is culpable in the extreme. He has moreover, to see that no failure of duty on his part or that of any of his subordinate lays the Minister open to justifiable criticism. The public reputation of his Minister should be a matter of great concern to him. "The civil servants like their Ministers to do well. They feel personally humiliated if he makes blunders. They take enormous pains to give him all the facts and to warn him against pitfalls. If they think the policy contemplated is wrong, they will tell him why, but always on the basis that it is for him to settle the matter, and if the Minister, as is sometimes the case, has neither the courage nor the brain to evolve a policy of his own, they will do their best to find him one, for after all it is better that the department should be run by public servants than that it should not be run at all. It was my task to change the policy which had so far been pursued by the Ministry of Transport. We argued it all out, we examined all the snags which the civil servants found for me and which I found for myself in plenty, but at the end of the discussions when I made it clear what the policy was to be, the civil servants not only gave all their best to make my policy a success but nearly worked themselves to death in labours behind the scenes in the conduct of various secondary negotiation". This kind of testimony by a Labour Cabinet Minister speaks volumes both for the civil servants and the Minister. The same relationship subsisted in the past in this country. It is to be found in certain instances today and the endeavour on all sides must be to see that it becomes fairly universal.

Parliamentary control over the working of Ministries, and more especially over expenditure, is most desirable. At the same time, the burden of the extra work imposed by such control should not be too disproportionate to the results likely to be achieved from it. At the Centre, apart from the Public Accounts Committee, Ministers have to deal with three other Parliamentary Committees, the Standing Committee of the Ministry, the Standing Finance Committee and the Estimates Committee. The Estimates Committee is an innovation, while the Standing Finance Committee is a relic of the days when the government was not a popular government constituted from the majority party in the legislature. The advice given by such a body enabled the then executive government to meet criticism in the legislature by modifying, if necessary, proposals about new items of expenditure to suit the views of the majority members of the legislature. When, however, the Ministry reponsible for running the government is itself representative, there would hardly seem any need for a body like the Standing Finance Committee. In the United Kingdom where the whole House of Commons converts itself into a Committee of Supply, the discussions take place after the government formulates its budget proposals and there is no Standing Finance Committee to scrutinise the proposals at the stage of formulation. Clearly the Estimates Committee and the Public Accounts Committee betwen them are quite enough to satisfy the requirements of examination of expenditure, the one contemporaneously and the other in retrospect. Under a system of responsible Parliamentary government, there would seem to be no scope for submitting to a Committee of the legislature specific proposals of expenditure by each Ministry. The Cabinet, which should command the confidence of the legislature, puts forward these proposals and the legislature has full opportunity of discussing the policy underlying each item of new expenditure during the discussions on the budget and the Appropriation Bill. The abolition of this Committee will help to reduce the burden on the departments to a certain extent and should, therefore, assist in the reduction of delays.

There is no truer maxim from the point of view of good administration than the old rule "What is not inspected, is not done". This is especially so regarding failure caused by persons and methods. Senior officers are often greatly disturbed about delays. They do

not seem to realise that at least a portion of the remedy is in their own hands. It lies in personal examination and vigilance. If every Secretary spent at least half a day once a week in going through the branches of his own Ministry, there can be very little doubt that delays would be considerably reduced. So too, if the Head of a Department were to make it a point to spend an hour a day in the branches of his office, a great deal of improvement would become apparent in a very short time. Not only would the personal interest of the highest authority in the department give an impulse to expedition, it would also enable him to see what the difficulties in working were, which of the men were good, which bad, which sections needed strengthening and from where men could be reduced. High officials are undoubtedly hard pressed in these days, but supervision too is part of their duty and time must be found for it, more especially when inefficiency has affected work greatly.

It has never been altogether unknown for officials in high positions to hold up files, more especially files dealing with difficult and important problems, for considerable periods. This is sometimes due to the functioning of the escape mechanism. The subject is disliked and so the mind subconsciously refuses to deal with the papers. At other times, the delay is due to the hope that sooner or later a period of sufficient leisure might arise to enable the matter to be studied properly. Most files, however, when kept for a week or so, seem to develop a species of inertia and dead weight. It is almost as if they had become sentient beings with a will directed against further movement, and a will which often succeeds in prevailing over even the strong-minded. Consequently, the wise official will make it a rule not to allow a file to remain longer with himself than is absolutely necessary. It may be that by keeping it and considering it, the quality of the decision he might reach on it or of the work that he would put into it, might improve. Such instances, however, are likely to be so rare that it is not worth taking the risk of holding up work unconscionably in the hope of such result. It is good that one's answers should be right, but nothing is so bad as no answer.

A certain amount of delay is also caused by the practice of letting all correspondence and files received in a department, except those marked to officers by name, be dealt with by an Assistant before being put up to any officer at all. An explanation for this sometimes

offered is the paucity of officers and the need to save their time by not letting them see any file until it is ready to be dealt with. There is no doubt, however, that in many matters a little guidance from the higher level would quicken disposal. It would seem to be advisable to have all papers seen on arrival by a fairly responsible officer. He could perhaps deal with a number almost as soon as they came in. For such a system to work on an extensive scale, it would be necessary to have more junior officers and less clerks.

Delay often becomes more prominent when a case has to be seen by more than one department before a decision is taken. This on occasion gets so bad that an offer of money for charitable purposes is sometimes likely to be withdrawn because the intending donor has not heard even after eight months whether government would like to accept the gift or not. Clearly, special action is necessary. Disposal could be speeded up if, for instance, there was a rule in all Secretariats of having a day once a month on which all files that have been pending in inter-departmental references for two months were brought before a joint meeting of the Secretaries, discussed and agreed on or the opposed views recorded. Thus, for instance, if in a provincial Secretariat, Finance, Home and Local Self-Government were interested in a file which had left Home two months before and had been pending with either of the others, it would come up at the Secretaries' meeting for settlement. The practice of meetings for discussion of particular questions has of course become quite a feature in recent years but the usefulness of these gatherings is sometimes detracted from by the fact that several of the members present not having studied the papers, are not in a position to give considered opinions and consequently take up lines which lead to further correspondence. This practice is detrimental to the success of all meetings and it should particularly be avoided when inter-departmental references are being discussed.

Another reason often urged for delay is that junior officers, generally Deputy Secretaries and Under Secretaries, decide far fewer cases than in the past with the result that the burden of work falls on Joint Secretaries and Secretaries. Various reasons are urged for this, which generally come to the same thing. Officers are unwilling to take responsibility because they feel that they are not likely to be

supported if things go wrong. Because of this feeling, their inclination is to play safe. If it is desired that more work should be done at lower levels, officers should be made to feel that their superiors trust them and are prepared to leave the initiative to them.

Continuous interference by Ministers and higher officers in matters which properly fall within the sphere of junior officers is also responsible for their failure to decide cases themselves. An example illustrating these points and showing how good senior officers dealt with them in the past is given below. During the war years, a junior Under Secretary was incharge of work which involved relations with and examining of requisitions from a very important concern at the head of which was a dignitary held in high esteem by the governments both here and in England. One day, the Under Secretary received a note from his Secretary asking that all cases relating to this body should be put up. He gathered together the files 38 in number, noted "Submitted" below the Secretary's note and sent them up. A day later, he got the files back with the Secretary's signature below his on the note sheet. Some days later having to see the Secretary in some other connection, the Under Secretary mentioned these files. The Secretary said, "Yes, I saw them". The Under Secretary thought it would a good opportunity to learn if anything had been wrong with any of them. The Secretary said, "I would have dealt with one or two differently but that's all all right". Said the Under Secretary "Won't you tell me how you would have dealt with them?" "It was a matter for discretion," said the Secretary, "not for knowledge, and when it was left to you, it was a matter for your discretion. Don't you bother about it, my lad".

Another reason for the passing up of files which should be dealt with at the lower stage is because of not knowing how to handle a matter. Now when a senior officer sees that this is the cause, he should invariably send for the junior concerned and explain how it could have been done instead of merely dealing with it himself. It may take more time and involve more trouble on a few occasions, but it gives the junior valuable training and will render him more useful for the future. It has to be remembered that the training of juniors is also an important part of the ordinary work of senior officers. Again, if junior officers are to do their part fully, they must

be treated with respect and must be made to realise their position as colleagues rather than as subordinates. The tendency that seems to be growing up in some quarters of having Deputy Secretaries and Under Secretaries rushing to airports and railway stations to receive and see off their Ministers and Secretaries is to be deplored.

What has been said here about the Secretariat, applies with even greater force to the districts. There too it is only by according proper support and creating the confidence that action taken honestly in contentious cases will be upheld, that officers will be induced to accept responsibility. An Officer must be certain that even if his action is found to have been wrong, his bonafides will not be impunged without good reason. When a few cases occur in which action first approved is later considered blameworthy because of political or other influence, the tendency inevitably is for officers not to take action themselves with resultant slowness in despatch and unwillingness to take responsibility.

While it is true that delay in the dispatch of work can be reduced and it is desirable that the public service should work as expeditiously as possible, it must always be remembered that the fundamental cause of delay lies in the very nature of public administration, *i.e.*, in its responsibility to Parliament. This is often not understood and leads to undeservedly unfavourable comparison with business administration. Business does not need to treat all comers impartially. It does not find the basis of its action in legal enactments, nor is a Board of Directors likely to issue any orders which they are not certain can be carried out. Again, there is no obligation on business to disclose any of the details of its work. It has not to be ready to answer questions in Parliament about every aspect of its work and every action of any subordinate. The looking up of precedents which is the basis of much that is termed red-tape follows from the need to be impartial, that is, to come to the same decision on similar facts whoever the person concerned. When all these are taken into consideration, it will be seen that while better organisation and more effective methods will undoubtedly quicken the pace of public business, they cannot possibly quicken it to that of private administration unless standards in respect of the matters referred to above are to be allowed to deteriorate greatly.

Discipline in government offices, it is sometimes said, has been the first victim of independence. This, it is stated, is more true about the clerical staff than about the officers, though even amongst officers there is said to be considerable slackening. The reasons put forward for this are many. It is stated that a large portion of the staff has remained on a temporary basis for many years and sees no prospect of being made permanent. Consequently, it watches the clock, does the least it can and has no incentive to do good work. Further, that the pay scales and allowances bear no correspondence to the increasing cost of living which affects living conditions so deterimentally that the depressed mental condition of the subordinate makes ordinary work impossible. In addition, there is neither reward nor punishment; reward for good work or punishment for bad. Most of these reasons are valid and a determined effort must be made to deal with these causes of deterioration now.

Although the entire temporary staff may not be required there can be little doubt that in many sections it should be possible to say that at least 30, 40 or 50 per cent. is likely to be needed permanently. Such people should be made permanent without waiting any further. It is quite clear that many activities for which temporary staff have been employed will have to continue on a permanent basis and an even larger proportion can perhaps be made permanent without any risk of future loss to Government. Making people permanent will cause contentment and give them a stake in the service, thus making them more amenable to discipline.

Government servants have indeed a very legitimate grievance in that Government have neither held the cost of living nor implemented the recommendations of the Pay Commission regarding increase of a slab in the dearness allowance scale for every increase of so many points in the cost of living. If indeed Government has now given up all hope of holding the cost of living, it cannot, with any fairness, continue to resist reasonable increases in dearness allowance. To say that if such increases are allowed, it will only add to inflation has some meaning if Government is at the same time making real all-out attempts to stop the price rises. Since that is not being done, all it means is that the section of society represented by government servants is being treated worse than other sections of society where income corresponds to cost of living. The government

servant, more especially the lower paid government servant cannot be expected to bear all the sacrifices all the time. He has shown remarkable restraint in not pressing his legitimate claims according to even the Pay Commission's recommendations accepted by Government, and it is about time his difficult situation received official recognition and amelioration.

In an ideal State of society good work would be the only criterion for promotion. That is not so in government service where seniority also counts for a great deal. There is no doubt, however, that recognition of merit is essential for good administration. Promotion to a superior cadre ought, in any case, to be on the basis of merit and even within a cadre it might be worthwhile having one or two posts with special allowances to which people whose work was particularly good could be appointed. The amounts need not necessarily be large though such inducement is definitely needed to provide incentive for effort and application. Acknowledgment of good work is often as much a need of the human spirit as food is of man's body. It would do no harm for Ministers to recognise this now and again even in respect of senior officers.

Comments have already been made on the difficulties of punishment in government service and measures suggested by which the procedure can be quickened. There is no doubt that if punishment is not awarded in particularly bad cases either because the higher officials do not wish to take the trouble involved in going through the procedure, or because of recommendations for leniency from influential parties, including ministers of other departments and legislators, work will continue to suffer. For the human animal in the mass, both the carrot and the stick are essential; neither by itself will produce full results. A judicious combination of both is needed.

It is very desirable that people in the lower grades of the public service should be given adequate opportunities to prove their fitness for more responsible work. Examples are not lacking to show that in spite of the almost complete rigidity of the heirarchical system, there have been found in the lower ranks exceptional men who have risen to the highest positions. We are not, however, concerned only with such; they will make their way anyhow. What is necessary is to evolve a system by which those amongst the lower ranks who are

fit for higher positions can be discovered and appointed. Generally this must be before the age of 35, for otherwise the habit of looking to superiors for orders becomes too deeply engrained to enable even good mental capacity to accept responsibility. Opportunities for further education must be made available in the form of special classes etc. for the younger members of the lower ranks of officials. Those who attend regularly will clearly demonstrate their industry and their desire for improvement. If they disclose talent, there should be scope for their advancement to the higher services. Proof of talent can take many forms. A man might write a book competently on some matter forming the subject matter of his work. He might show talent during discussions at which perhaps the head of the department might be present both to induce good feeling and to get to know the capacity of those who work under him in the lower ranks.

Another way of removing discontent and inducing discipline would be by showing that the employer was interested in what happened to the staff during a period of suffering. For instance, it is stated that very few people can tell what happens to a clerk when he falls ill. Does he get the necessary medicines? Is he sent to hospital in good time? Is medical attention adequate? All these are matters which make a great deal of difference to a man's working life. Government servants are in many cases entitled to free medical aid but for the subordinate staff this generally does not mean anything very much. Some authority of the same kind as the Labour Welfare Officers is obviously needed to supervise this side of things.

Whitley Councils have already been established in at least one province and one department at the Centre. Meetings are not very frequent but indication of useful results is not altogether absent. It is clear that this institution furnishes a valuable instrument for bringing together different points of view and enabling the subordinate staff to place its real difficulties before government. Informal discussion gives the opportunity for bringing out many things which cannot be said in representations and petitions without causing undue umbrage. It is to be hoped that much greater use will be made of these councils in allaying that discontent which in many cases lies at the root of what is said to be the widespread disease of indiscipline. "Since the introduction of Whitleyism into the civil service some 30

years ago the emphasis has shifted from a desire on the staff side to have old grievances redressed and on the official side to yield as little as they dare, to a genuine desire on the part of both, to achieve the declared aim of Whitleyism to secure the greatest measure of cooperation between the State in its capacity of employer and the general body of civil servants in matters affecting the civil service with a view to increase efficiency in the public service combined with the well-being of those employed". A well-tried institution of this nature certainly deserves the fullest encouragement in this country.

Associations of public servants are also to be welcomed. It is a good not a bad thing, that civil servants should be strongly organised in representative bodies. In order, however, that they should not be pawns of any political parties, it is very desirable that associations of civil servants belonging to the clerical and higher grades should draw all their office holders from amongst themselves. Such associations are not likely to contain members who do not know their own rights or to whom other members of the same services cannot explain them fully and adequately. Industrial civil servants and Class IV servants may not, however, be able to represent their own position as well as they should, and it may be necessary for them to have a responsible and knowledgeable man from outside as an office holder.

CHAPTER VII

TRAINING

In November, 1947, the Officer Shortage Committee recommended the creation of a Directorate of Methods, Organisation and Training for the Central Government. Very little, however, seems to have been done, beyond the establishment of a Training School for clerks and assistants under the auspices of the Home Ministry. The I.A.S. Training School, which had begun work shortly before that time, still continues without a wholetime principal. This in itself shows the very little importance the Central Government seems to attach to training, even to the training of those who are to occupy the highest places in its administration in the future. In addition to being Principal, the present incumbent holds two other appointments. He is Establishment Officer of the Government of India and Joint Secretary of the Home Ministry. However industrious and able the official, he can scarcely do justice to all three appointments. There can be no doubt that a suitable full-time Principal who will live in the School, and spend all his time with the pupils is an immediate necessity. The proper incumbent for such a post would be a man who combines wide administrative experience and academic interests with an impressive personality and a sympathetic and cheerful nature. Many of our recruits are bound to have angles, and the rubbing off of these will be all the easier if in the first year of their training they come into close contact with such a guide. There should be no attempt at cheese-paring in fixing the salary of such a man. If a suitable person is not available here, there should be no hesitation in obtaining one from abroad. In some ways, perhaps that would be an advantage, for there are not likely to be very many suitable Indians of forty-five to fifty able to walk ten miles on a summer morning or ride twenty after breakfast on a winter day and the physical fitness necessary for such feats is essential for turning our college youth into good administrative service officers.

In order to have suitable personnel for the administrative machine, the three essentials are proper recruitment, proper training,

and proper organisation and methods. In the United Kingdom this is ensured by "the triple alliance" of the Civil Service Commission, the training staff under the Director of Training and Education and the organisation and methods staff, whose combined basic task may be summarised as "to recruit the right type of person and give him the right type of training for the right type of job". The question of recruitment is treated separately later. Certain broad considerations regarding organisation and methods have already been dealt with but both as regards organisation and methods and training, the moral that seems to stand out from past experience is that unco-ordinated *ad hoc* and discontinuous attempts are not sufficient. These owe their origin sometimes to criticisms in Parliament regarding inefficiency and are confined to a few individual Ministries or Departments. Sometimes they are *ad hoc* measures of reorganisation sought to be implemented following the recommendations of a Retrenchment or Economy Committee which throws out a certain number of officers and staff; sometimes they spring from the suggestions of a relatively inexpert body like the Estimates Committee. All these, however. do not lead very far. The lesson of the last four years is that an expert, coordinated and continuous body must exist which plans, supervises and constantly adapts to changing needs all the arrangements necessary for proper training, proper organisation and proper methods of work. The Central Government should immediately appoint a Director of Training, Organisation and Methods with the necessary officer and other staff. The Director would have two branches under him one on the training side and the other on the organisation and methods side. Ministries having a numerous clerical staff would also need small organisation and methods sections within themselves. The basic points in organisation and methods work are examination of the work as it is done, the devising of means to improve efficiency and economy, the spreading of this knowledge by personal explanation and contact. Training through classes cannot take the place of such work. The organisation and methods man really puts himself in the position of the clerk doing the work, sees the difficulties, attempts to find ways for dealing with them and if the man in charge is doing something wrong, explains to him what it is and how to avoid it. Personal approach from an equal level is the essence of this work. The Directorate would take up each Ministry and after "a careful study of the method

of work, make its own suggestions on the spot. In case of difference of opinion between the Director and the Ministry, the matter would have to be referred to Cabinet. Orders having been passed, the Directorate would keep a watch to see that they were carried out".

In order to carry sufficient weight, the Director would have to be of Secretary's standing. Since up to now all work related to training and organisation has been done in the Home Ministry, it might be convenient for him to work from that Ministry to begin with, dealing directly with the Minister. Finally perhaps this department might come to rest in the Finance Ministry. It would be an advantage to a department concerned with economy in expenditure, to have to broaden its view to consider organisation and training and to realise through it continuously the constructive functions of finance. States too would be well advised to have Organisation, Methods and Training Sections, working directly under the Chief Secretary. To begin with, we are not likely to have sufficient numbers of people expert in organisation and methods. If, however, care is taken to have a few properly trained officers, they can impart the essentials to those working under them. Gradually as work continues, very probably an expertise will develop particularly suited to Indian conditions.

The Director will have to have two senior officers to assist him: one for organisation and methods, and one for training. Training, besides aiming at precision and clarity in the conduct of business and improvement of staff morale, must also encourage the civil servant to see his work in its widest context and to persever with his own educational development. It must prepare him for higher work and greater responsibilities and attune his outlook and methods to the new needs of changing times. These are the aims the Assheton Committee set down for training of civil servants in England and there is little doubt that they fit the needs of our situation very well.

There are two main occasions for training: there is the training on admission into government service which will equip a man with the necessary knowledge to perform his duties in the capacity to which he has been appointed, and there is the training at intervals thereafter designed to refresh his knowledge, bring him in touch with new developments and keep his mind active and supple. Both these would come within the purview of the Director of Training, the

first being furnished mostly in the department itself, and the second through specially organised classes outside.

Training of officers in the districts is, of course, another matter. Its importance in the first stages of an officer's carrier can hardly be overstressed. This depends very much on the senior officer, the Collector, in the case of the Indian Administrative Service, under whom the young civil servant first works. The training is not only in procedure and methods; its scope covers the whole of official life and conduct. It must help the officer to realise fully his duties and responsibilities, as well as his position of trust and honour as a public servant. It is one of the unfortunate features of the present time that there are so few officers left in the districts capable of imparting the right training to the new I.A.S. From all accounts much of it is good material, but again from many accounts it needs training badly. In the interests of the future, every province ought to send out some of its suitable senior civil servants to hold charge of districts and to treat such districts as training grounds for the young. The desire to keep senior officers in the Secretariat is understandable but senior officers are in any case a wasting asset and the needs of the present have to be measured against the interests of the future.

To such training would, of course, have to be added at least during the first years of an officer's service short courses organised by the Director of Training in various subjects likely to be of use to the officer. All this may seem somewhat expensive to the uninitiated but it has always got to be remembered that administration is both a science and an art and neither of these can be imparted except through training. Though some people are born administrators and some may acquire the practice of administration by rule of thumb and the light of nature, yet the efficiency and capacity for service of even these would be greatly increased by proper training. For the less fortunate, training is absolutely essential.

It may on occasion prove useful to Government to send out to foreign universities some of its specialists for a short course and to send for short periods to selected firms by arrangement with them some of its younger men dealing with industrial and commercial matters. These points would also have to be kept in view by the Director of Training.

CHAPTER VIII

RECRUITMENT

It has already been recommended that recruitment to all grades of government service should be conducted in a manner which eliminates scope for patronage and, along with it, occasion for suspicion that patronage is exercised. It has been suggested that this should apply to temporary staff as well as permanent staff and that the method should be extension of the principle of selection by committee. This method is of course already in operation as regards services and posts which fall within the purview of the Public Service Commissions, Central and State. At the same time, several lower posts and certain posts of a special type are excluded, in consultation with the Public Service Commission, from the jurisdiction of that body. The selection committee system, however, already prevails under some governments, and in respect of certain categories, of these excluded posts. In view of the reason given above, it would be desirable to extend this system wherever and for whatever posts it is not prevalent at present. At the same time it would be helpful to bring within the supervisory ambit of the Public Service Commission concerned all appointments by committees. This supervisory authority would of course be distinct from its authority in the direct field of selection. It will thus be an added responsibility of the Public Service Commission and will be discharged by making periodical checks, calling for papers, etc., the object being to ensure that committees of selection function properly. The substitution of a body of persons for a single individual as the selecting authority achieves not only the negative, though important, result of minimising patronage but also probably makes for better selection, for here as well as elsewhere, often two heads are better than one.

A great deal, however, must depend on the technique of selection employed both by the Public Service Commissions and the Committees. Obviously, the technique must differ for different grades and different requirements. This cannot be gone into in detail here but it seems clear that the proper technique in each case must be

evolved and re-examined by pooling from time to time the experience on the one hand of the Department and the Organisation and Methods Section which have the opportunity of watching the work of the recruits after appointment and, on the other, of the Public Service Commission and the Selection Committee which have selected the candidates. The technique must also depend to a great extent on the educational opportunities available in the country. From this point of view there is need for a great deal more contact between the Public Service Commissions and the Universities.

Two observations may be made about the present method of recruitment to the higher civil services *i.e.* I.A.S., I.F.S., I.P.S., I.A. and A.S. etc. The importance of psychological tests must be realised and they must gradually replace the *viva voce*. A fifteen minutes' conversation with laymen, although possessing the wide experience of the Public Service Commissioners, can be no substitute for an expert psychological examination designed to give a scientific insight into the candidate's mental and emotional make-up. The holding of such tests will of course cost more but if thereby the services get better material, and there is no reason to suppose that they will not, the extra money will have been well spent. There are also often complaints about the low standard of some of the papers set for optional subjects and it is felt that candidates taking those subjects have an unfair advantage. This is inevitable from time to time, but in order to give as equal a chance as possible, that part of the examination which is common to all candidates must form a larger proportion of the whole than at present, enabling relative merit to be more properly judged.

Officers of the All-India Services, *i.e.*, I.A.S., I.P.S., after recruitment, are allotted to provinces and it seems desirable to consider under this head the method of such allotment. There is a considerable body of opinion both among the Services and among non-officials which holds that it is desirable that officers should as far as possible be allotted to provinces other than those of their birth. While it is true that this may mean less local knowledge and in some cases necessitate the learning of new languages, yet it is felt that these advantages are more than outweighed by the independence from local ties which follows from service outside one's own province. Reference has already been made to the conflicting claims of private

and public virtue. In such circumstances there is as a rule no conflict, as private virtue has no sphere of operation. Moreover, such allotment would make a valuable contribution to the cause of national unity. Each province would then, "in its administration present a replica of many of the elements that contribute to the varied richness of this ancient land. A great dramatist imagines a world government in which the local administration of each country is conducted by inhabitants of other countries, thus ensuring impartial administration and at the same time impressing upon the inhabitants of all lands the essential unity of the planet. We in India are fortunate enough to be able to carry out, if we will, that experiment in large measure, thus providing an effective check to fissiparous tendencies and obtaining an essential uniformity". The argument about local knowledge is probably stronger as regards the I.P.S., but here in a way the absence of local ties is even more important.

Allied to this question is another of great importance to the administration which, though not strictly connected with recruitment, can be said to have substantial relationship with it. The I.C.S. is an all-India service. Its members were recruited for service throughout the country and though allotted to specific provinces were always liable to be sent to others. The course of events has so arranged matters that there is a very uneven distribution of this scarce and valuable commodity among the Central Government and the States Governments. In the interests of the country as a whole, it would seem desirable to arrange the service into various age-groups and then re-allot it in a realistic fashion with a view to meet urgent administrative needs, so that the best possible use in the larger interests of the country is made of all trained administrators and none rest in comfortable back-waters, owing to provincial or central abandon or oversight. Machinery for considering this problem has already been suggested in the form of the Elder Minister and Secretary Board.

Whenever the question of administrative difficulties in the economic sphere comes up, some one is sure to suggest as a certain remedy the creation of an Economic Civil Service. It is said the operation of controls, the running of State enterprises of an industrial or commercial character, the manning of certain departments such as Industry

and Commerce, Economic affairs etc., the implementation of certain development plans—all these can be left to the Economic Civil Service. Those who offer this as a solution appear on further discussion to be thinking of four different types of personnel at one and the same time as covered by the phrase, Economic Civil Service. These types are persons, competent to advise Government at the highest level of economic policy, persons competent at a lower level to collect and present the economic data on which advice regarding economic policy may be formulated, persons who having a grounding in economics may be expected to discharge the duties of certain secretariat and executive posts more efficiently than if they did not possess such knowledge, and persons possessing the managerial experience and ability associated with efficient business. Now a service which included persons possessing these varying capacities would certainly be a unique institution but the probability of creating such a service is very limited indeed. Along with this mixing up of categories, there is a confused belief in the minds of the advocates of the Economic Civil Service that recruitment confined to persons with degrees in economics will produce all these types. Obviously, only very distinguished economists would be capable of giving economic advice at the highest level. So, too, knowledge of economics does not imply administrative and managerial ability. Graduates in economics would be useful as assistants to those who have to collect and present economic data, but there need be nothing of the dimensions of a service for this purpose. Officers of this class could not in any case come from raw degree holders. Economic grounding would certainly be of some use to those holding posts in departments where decisions have often to be made in the light of economic data and trends but there would be no particular advantage in confining recruitment to these posts to those with degrees in economics. An officer with general ability could be given the necessary economic training during the earlier years of service. On all grounds then, there would seem to be no case for a special Economic Civil Service.

At the same time the lack of theoretical appreciation of the interconnections between various sectors of economic life among officials responsible for fairly important decisions leads to serious lack of coordinated policy. It is sometimes remarked that such officials seem to look down upon theoretical knowledge as if it were a weakness in

one dealing with practical problems. In reality, of course, the theoretical approach is often very essential in laying down broad lines of practical application. Fundamentally, what is required is a receptiveness on the part of administrators to the discussion of the theoretical issues involved in major policy decisions. None of these is so complicated that laymen cannot understand its practical implications. All that is required is on the one side, someone to expound these issues clearly and on the other a certain disposition on the part of those in charge of policy decisions to take theoretical issues fully into account before making up their minds. The theoretical approach has no doubt its failings, but in India, as matters stand today, this approach in economic matters has to be encouraged rather than discouraged. From this point of view it would seem to be desirable to bear in mind, while recruiting, for instance, to the I.A.S. the necessity of choosing some specialists in particular fields of economics like Industry, Finance, Transport etc. It might be worthwhile to send selected people abroad for two or three years' research in a specialised field. They would then get that proper perspective of the various links in the economic system which the policy-making official in the financial and industrial field must have.

There remains the question of having in Government service a certain number of men who can be used generally in industrial matters, that is to say, who can, in case of need, assume the over-all management of an industrial concern and run it without difficulty. No person, unless of course he has been trained from the beginning in a particular industry and has spent many years in acquiring its techniques, can hope to be a technical expert in it, but between being a technical expert and being the man in charge of an industrial concern, there is a great difference. What is needed really is the special technique of the skilled administrator—"the man or woman who may indeed possess special knowledge in several fields, but will be a good adviser in any field, because he or she knows how and where to go to find reliable knowledge and can assess the expert knowledge of others at its true worth, can spot the strong and weak points in any situation at short notice, and can advise how to handle a complex situation". This, the multi-purpose civil servant has in the past acquired and, conditions being equal, probably will continue to acquire provided always from his earliest service days he is taught

to regard clever superficiality as one of the worst sins. What is needed in addition is grounding in economics during the earlier years of service and seconding to several industrial concerns from time to time during the middle years. The need to have men with these qualifications means recruiting more civil servants than are absolutely essential for the jobs in hand, but it also means availability of such men whenever the necessity arises.

CHAPTER IX

ADMINISTRATION, PLANNING AND THE PUBLIC

GOVERNMENT'S functions vary from time to time. Their scope diminishes or is enlarged, depending on the nature of the society Government is aiming to serve. The gradations may vary from the static security state at one end to the dynamic welfare state at the other. The latter is not something superadded to the former but is rather a growth from it and an expansion of it. So, too, the machinery for the execution of welfare plans is not a separate entity superadded to the basic machinery of administration. The connection between the two is organic rather than mechanical. Accordingly, if plans are not to be abortive, the first task is to ensure that the nucleus of administration is sound. It is for this reason that the short-term suggestions made in some of the previous chapters for the arrest of administrative deterioration have as much relevance for the eventual success of planning as for the immediate rectification of administrative deficiencies.

The main administrative requirements of planning are essentially the same as the long term needs of ordinary administration—right recruitment, right training, right allocation. Such difference as there is between the two is in degree rather than in kind. Depending on the nature and extent of the plans, the recruitment will be larger and more varied, the training perhaps more specialised and the choice of the right man for the right place more than ordinarily important.

Two dangers have to be avoided in this connection, namely, planning ahead of men and money and planning in compartments. The previous five year plan has been dislocated, among other things, because of planning ahead of finance. In the same way, it is easy in the flow of enthusiasm to plan ahead of the availability of trained men. Personnel requirements should be listed and priority schemes for training started and advanced before launching on the new services themselves. A clear-visioned realist, in spite of being an

ardent adherent of nationalisation and the socialist state, once rightly remarked "Never take over anything unless you can run it at least as efficiently as those who ran it before", and the same principle applies to plans. In other words: Do not start a new plan unless you have made reasonably sure, by preparing the proper personnel etc., that you can run it efficiently.

Again, some plans are made by the Central Government and some by the State Governments. Plans are also made by different departments of the same Government. The dangers of compartmental planning are many and obvious. Integration of plans and coordination and simplification of agencies are, therefore, essential. Except for special schemes that can be isolated, such as particular hydro-electric projects, it would be desirable, before launching on large scale implementation, to study the effect of the convergence into selected areas of the several individual schemes pertaining to those areas. In other words, there must be a blue-print of all the activities proposed for the particular area. With this in front, the co-ordination of the existing agencies and the new machinery sought to be set up must be studied. Thus, duplication and extravagance can be avoided. The preparation of such regional blue-prints would also bring to light any other special difficulties that in particular regions might be likely to detract from the general efficiency of the plan made or to make modifications of it necessary in view of local conditions.

In planning, too, it is very desirable to remember that the bulk of the effort must be in the countryside. Hence, the need for what has been termed "rural-mindedness." Since government servants, more especially of the higher ranks, tend to come, as a rule, from the urban areas which are the centres of education, there is some ground for the complaint of urban bias which is often said to distort Government policy and administrative decision. Very special care needs to be taken both in selection and in training to see that the staff employed in planning and in carrying out the plans has a real appreciation of the resources and needs of the rural areas.

Special training is also necessary to get the government servant's attitude to the public right. The essential things to be remembered are that the public servant's livelihood is derived from the public revenues and, consequently, on him rests a special obligation of

service to the public, from which follows the need for behaving towards all members of the public in a particularly courteous and understanding manner. Since contact with the public is either by interview or by letters, this manner can best be demonstrated by adopting the right technique on these occasions. Such right behaviour among government servants is especially important to a State aiming at welfare activities, nor is it less important in our present day conditions when controls, however inadequate and incomplete, affect the daily lives of so large a portion of our citizens. The closer connection between the Government and the people than in the pre-war period renders essential right behaviour towards the public.

The historical evolution of the functions of Government in this country may now be said to have passed beyond the stage of Security towards that of Equality. The line of future development must be fulfilment of Equality and towards Abundance. The principal functions of Government in the first stage were external and internal security and basic administration. War conditions and the shortages that followed from them compelled the bringing in of controls, that is, attempted to bring about equitable sharing. No one could claim that this aim has been attained, but, at any rate, the conception of "fair share for all" has for the first time taken its place among the relevant factors that underlie the making of policy and of plans. The aim of raising the standard of living also remains unfulfilled. It and the middle "Equality" are both important elements in a welfare state. The final stage involves for the administrative machinery much greater contact with the public than the first or even the second. Hence arises the need to train not only the principal officers, who, as administrators, will be in charge of big schemes or, as technical experts, will harness Nature for our purpose, but also numerous others who must come in touch with the public, so that they can listen patiently and sympathetically, explain lucidly and courteously and be firm without at the same time being irritated and causing irritation.

An understanding of the relationship between the public and planning is essential for a proper realisation of the place of administrative machinery in planning. Plans themselves must of course be

for the public. In other words, they must aim at raising the standard of living of all classes, especially the agriculturists. This does not mean, however, that every stage of the plan should be such as would be accepted if a referendum were held. In the main, both ends and means must be laid down by Government and Legislature. There is a section of opinion which holds that nothing should be done except that with which the people wholly agree and that, if they are likely to disagree with any particular aspect, that should not be attempted. It may be conceded that there is perhaps something to be said for this view. Its significance, however, is very limited. You may not be able to take the people where they won't go at all, but there is surely a definite duty, provided you are convinced that it is for their good, at least to lead them where they will not desist from following.

In a democracy, it has been said, the Government leads and the people cooperate. If the Government is not to attempt to lead at all and is always to follow, it may be a *laissez-faire* Government but it certainly cannot hope to plan. While there should be no hesitation in adapting the procedure on relatively minor matters to public tendencies, as regards objective and major technique the position must be very different. Only those objectives may have to be abandoned that will find no cooperation even after strenuous efforts to lead have been made. Since, however, the objective here is the raising of the standard of living, no question of any lack of cooperation from any large section of the population can arise. Such changes in technique as prejudice the objective should not be accepted in spite of the popular view. Modification to the extent that they do not so prejudice it is possible. For instance, if the objective is the equitable distribution of food and the technique is rationing to which certain sections of the people object, it is surely not right that, because of the objection, rationing itself should be given up. On the other hand, modification in, for instance, the manner of filling forms for applications for rations, the verification of ration cards, etc. may certainly be in accordance with the wishes of large sections of the people, so long as they do not prejudice the objective. Except on this basis, planning which implies centralisation of purpose and infusion of drive, can have no meaning in the context of democracy. The importance of this discussion is its particular application to suggestions continuously made for associating the "people" with planning.

If there is to be planning, the essential principle may be said to be Decentralisation of Responsibility and Execution, provided this can be brought about without Dissipation of Purpose or Deterioration of Efficiency.

The various schemes that have from time to time been put forward for bringing Government to the people's door and letting them manage their own affairs—Janapada Sabhas, Village Panchayats, etc. have to be judged from this point of view. Conditions are different in different places and some of these institutions may be very useful in their localities. On the whole, however, it would seem desirable to proceed cautiously with new decentralisation of this kind during planning. Let us consider the functions decentralised. These are, as a rule, public health, lighting, village roads, village water supply, etc. If the creation of decentralised agencies for them is going to result in faction and the possibility of further demoralisation of the administration, as indeed it has in some cases, can it be considered at all worthwhile? The important thing is to see that the economic objective of planning, which in turn, is dependent on the maintenance of good administration, is not prejudiced. Where public enthusiasm and effort can be canalised without in any way affecting administration detrimentally, it is certainly desirable to encourage such effort. Thus, for instance, the worthwhile work of self-help of many of the U.P. Panchayats would seem to merit support. All these trends, in reality, need careful watching. There should be no dogmatism for or against them. Experience will make clear the facts, in a short while, provided observation is keen and dispassionate. There is but little doubt that if the two-member board suggested earlier constantly watches their development, it will be able to make up its mind quickly and advise rightly.

The possibilities of obtaining worthwhile results in country-wide planning vary greatly with those of obtaining the requisite degree of cohesion among the people. In some countries, cohesion is obtained willingly because of the greater homogeneity in the standards of living of the people and their greater ability to understand their own real needs and the situation and needs of their country. In other countries, cohesion is attained by the rule of a well-knit, strong and numerous, though compared with the population small, party over a

vast population with low standards of life into which the powerful nucleus pumps in propaganda and ideology accompanied by slight improvements in the standard of living. There is, of course, no question of real democracy in such a State, the ultimate settler of opposition being invariably the bullet.

While in this country there is a large population with a very low standard of living, the idea of infusing cohesion in the manner indicated above is repugnant to all except a very few. We are and wish to remain a democracy and in a democracy situated as we are, the likelihood of an ideology or plan creating an uncritical nation-wide enthusiasm is extremely limited. All the more, therefore, is it the special responsibility of those placed at the headship of the nation to see that there is no failure either of purpose or approach. The one must be kept in mind continuously: the other must be efficient and determined.

CONCLUSION

THIS report has been a truly co-operative effort. The responsibility for the conclusions and recommendations is solely mine, but neither would have been possible had it not been for the hearty goodwill and warm confidence extended to me by people of all ranks and classes of society throughout the country. I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to them.

I thank the Planning Commission for having entrusted to me a task so full of interest that the labour involved in it has not seemed to impose any strain at all.

In conclusion, I would express my deep gratefulness to my friend, Mr. B. Venkatappiah, for the time and energy he has devoted to discussing, almost daily, the various aspects of the problem with me. His assistance generally and in clarifying the issues has been invaluable.

A. D. GORWALA.

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